Plans to put

the game on another plan THE INDEPENDENT

ON SATURDAY

Saturday 13 December 1997

Labour at war with 'Today'

abour has declared war on BBC Radio's Today programme, threatening to suspend co-operation in retaliation for 'the John Humphrys problem'. Anthony ins and Louise Jury observe some brutal n-twisting.

Requests for ministers to appear on Today could be denied by the party if John Humphrys persists in interrupting them and denying them the opportunity to put their views to the listeners, David Hill, director of communications, said in an exchange of correspondence leaked to the Liberal Democrats.

After an interview with Harriet Harman, Social security Secretary, on lone parents' benefit on Wednesday, Mr Hill wrote to John Barton, the editor: "We ... are seriously considering whether, as a party, we will suspend co-operation when you make hids through us for government ministers."

Although programmes make interview requests directly to departments, party headquarters acts as a clearing house and because of tight links between party and government. Mr Hill probably speaks for all misters. He told Mr Barton the whole of Millbank headquarters was talking about the interview "when I got back from the 9am meeting" - the daily media co-ordination meeting chaired by Peter Mandelson, Minister without Portfolio, and attended by Alastair Carapbell, the Prime Minister's Chief Press Secretary.

Mr Hill said that after the "ridiculous exchange" and the repeated interruptions no one would have been any the wiser as to Ms Harman's explanation of government policy - a point made by some Labour backh inch critics after she wound up the Commons tht. Mr Barton said he was surprised Ms Harman had not complained at the time and had - answered questions at length. "I felt this morning that I was listening to a rigorous, fair-minded interview which illuminated an important policy issue."

Mr Barton said listeners would be the losers from any suspension of co-operation and that he was completely satisfied they would continue to have a good working relationship with Labour. "We have received full co-operation since the exchange of letters. The matter is now at an end."

A BBC spokesman said: "We take everything the political parties say to us seriously, but we are an independent public-service broadcaster and the remit for our interviewers is to ask the questions that we believe the public, our listeners, want answered."

They certainly did not perceive there to be a "John Humphrys problem. He is one of our top political interviewers. We believe he got it right." A source said a Humphrys interview with Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, the following morning had, if anything, been more robust than the one with Ms Harman.

Made of money...



Good cents: Bill Gates gazes from a photomosaic made of digital-image hank notes, commissioned by the billionaire from Robert Silvers. For more on the Microsoft magnate, see page 7, and, for photomosaics, turn over to the Big Picture

INSIDE TODAY

The date rape drug comes to Britain page 6



Riot and danger: Watch out for Ben Jonson page 17

ALSO IN YOUR 5-SECTION PAPER



Will you give Mary a bed this Christmas? But the interpretation provided by other governments 1°C LAST was sharply at odds with this. Their officials said that there would be nothing stopping the inner group from holding their

At 16, Mary ran away from a life of abuse. Today she is homeless. Could you sleep easy on Christmas Eve knowing she was shivering in a bus shelter?

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discussions on the disputed

matter before it was referred to

stop this happening, goes to the

heart of Mr Blair's fears about

the new grouping: that those in-

side the Euro-zone could "ore-

cook" decisions on crucial

economic matters before re-

ferring them on to the other

The fact that Britain cannot

all 15 ministers.

The club that doesn't want Blair

price of Britain's sion to stay out of first wave of opean Monetary on was exacted on y Blair last night. Prime Minister was ed to concede that ain can be kept out ertain key EU etary and economic assions. Katherine watched a two-tier pe unfold.

eight hours of tense and d debate Mr Blair was still ng to salvage a comprowhich would limit the 1 to Britain's influence allowing Euro-X, an exe grouping of member states taking part in the single currency, to proceed.

The debate was dearly acrimonious. Mr Blair and the Luxembourg Foreign Minister, Jacques Poos, were caught on camera disputing Britain's right to be treated as an equal partner. The German Chancellor, Helmut Kohl, took Mr Blair to task several times. According to official notes of the debate seen by The Independent. Mr Kohl interrupted Mr Blair at one point to remonstrate.

"I like this less and less," he said. "Tony can't say we have excluded the UK, we are trying to accommodate him."

It was not clear if a final decision could be reached last night. But it appeared Mr Blair had stopped challenging the principle of a two-tier Europe, a system whereby those not taking part in the single currency

for debate on currency management questions linking those sharing the new money.

Under a compromise on the table last night. Britain and the three other countries not likely to join monetary union in the first wave - Sweden, Denmark and Greece looked set to win some safeguards against marginalisation and were gaining ground in an argument on reining in the remit of the new grouping.

Government officials were presenting these as key concessions which would leave mosi debate and all real power with Ecofin, the EU council of finance ministers where Gordon Brown the Chancellor rep-

resents Britain. The formula drafted by the Luxembourg Presidency and the Dutch would enshrine

making forum while at the same time allowing ministers from the "in" countries to meet for joint management of the single cur-

rency on issues affecting them. Britain and the other "outs" fear that Euro-X would effectively shul them out of the lop table of economic and political decision making. Those fears were to be further allayed by a series of written guarantees, They would automatically receive an agenda prior to the meetings of Euro-X and could raise objections if they felt a

topic was of "common interest". But the French were leading resistance to Britain's demand that the outs should "by right" he invited to take part in all hut a narrowly defined series of confidential topics - for example, negotiations prior to a realignment

could be excluded from a club meetings of all 15 EU finance of the value of the Euro against ministers as the only decision- an "out" member's currency.

The "ins" were still insisting that it would be up to the Euro-insiders to determine what constituted an issue of common interest and whether to let the outsiders then participate. In the event of a dispute those not in the common currency club could demand to have the agenda item referred to the next meeting of Ecofin.

Mr Blair's spokesman interpreted this as a victory which would in effect render the Euro-X discussions irrelevant, "Power will remain in Ecofin," he said.

Time Off, page 2 . The Eye

Web address: http://www independent.co.uk

ODAY'S NEWS

olice face lambasting

report into the handling of the Stephen Lawrence murwill contain stinging criticism of the police. The Indeident can reveal. The inquiry into the stabbing of the ick South London teenager, to be published on Monday the Police Complaints Authority, will re-Ignite a sensie subject with wide implications. Page 3

Jackal in court

llich Ramirez Sanchez, hetter known as Carlos the Jackal. clearly enjoyed the first day of his trial for murder yesterday after three years in French jails. The former Public Enemy Number One smiled so enthusiastically at the mostly female jury that he was told off by the presiding judge. He gave his profession as professional revolutionary. Page II

Heathrow bounces back

Heathrow Airport is expected to be operating nearly normal services today after fire broke out in a Burger King restaurant in Terminal One and spread through ducting in the roof. No one was hurt, but more than 300 flights had to be cancelled, stranding thousands of passengers in the UK and Europe. Page 3

COLUMN ONE

Stickers put brakes on high-speed video driving

Perhaps the cinemas in Acton, west London, should show more James Dean or Marion Brando films. In the summer, Michael Websier, a local resident, wrote to the House of Lords to complain that "I doo't think it's far-fetched to suspect that [young people] get their ideas of driving from the way in which they have driven video racing cars."

Perhaps he hasn't seen Rebel Without A Cause, the James Dean film in which young meo play chicken by driving at top speed towards a sheer drop, or The Wild One, in which Marloo Brando perfects his high-speed sneer on a motorbike.

But his views were duly forwarded to the Home Office, and to Jack Straw, who handed his letter to the Video Standards Council with a query as to whether computer games should have some sort of warning telling people not to imitate this behaviour at home, or on the road. The VSC forwarded it to the European Leisure Software Puhlisher's Association (Elspa), which represents the games industry.

Conveniently, the news of this emerged just as a new "driving" game called Grand Theft Auto was released for the Sony Playstation. Like most computer "driving" games it depicts high-speed pursuits, crashes and complete disregard for fuel economy - which has earned it a VSC "18" sticker.

But Steve Cheese, Elspa's operations manager, said a warning sticker



Hot pursuit: the new 'driving' game Grand Theft Auto

on games would "serve no purpose". He commented; "I think most people are intelligent enough to know not to do that sort of thing. But there does seem to be a hit of a nanny attitude permeating through everything at the moment.

Elspa is meeting the Home Office soon to put its point. A Home Office spokesman said of the sticker idea: "We would like to talk to people in the industry first, not just dismiss an idea out of hand."

And surely Elspa should consider that children bave been seen copying kung-fu leaps like those in Mortal Kombat, another hugely popular game? Mr Cheese was unconvinced, "II's no different from me as a kid pretending to be a knight in armour, or cowboys and Indians," he said. There's no evidence that games actually influence behaviour at all."

And even if there is, what if someone invents a video game in which you have to help old ladies across the road, rescue lost kittens and paint pensioners' fences? Maybe that really will need a warning sticker - to say that it doesn't represent reality.

Charles Arthur, Science Editor

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PEOPLE



Talent honoured: Playwright Tom Stoppard received a knighthood and comedian Victoria Photograph: Rebecca Naden/PA Wood was made an OBE yesterday at Buckingham Palace

Bail for woman in baby Karli kidnap case

The woman accused of snatching the baby Karli Hawthorne was freed on bail yesterday.

A judge overturned the decisioo taken by Basildon magistrates on Monday that Denise Giddings, 33, should be remanded in custody in London's Holloway prison.

She was charged with the abduction of baby Karli from the maternity unit of Basildon General Hospital in Essex a week ago.

In a statement read to open court after an hourlong hearing, Judge Philip Clegg said he had made his decision after reading psychiatric reports on Mrs "I am satisfied in this case that the public will not

be in any danger hy Mrs Giddings being out on hail. I have granted her hail on fairly stringent terms," he

"These terms will mean her residing at an undisclosed address and on a substantial surety."

Mrs Giddings, a mother of three from Lagudon Hills, Basildon, left court with her family for an unknown address. Barry Spanjar, her solicitor, said she was "relieved and a little bit tearful".

He refused to go into what was discussed in court, as the decision was made in chambers, with no members of the public or press present. But he said: "Denise is very relieved and anxious

to see her children. She wants to spend some time with her boys and have Christmas with her family." Mrs Giddings' mother, father, sister and other

members of her family were at court and she was expected to see them all yesterday. Mr Spanjar said; "It is going to take time for her

to find her feet again. She has had a horrendous last few days in Holloway prison and it will take some time to get back to some degree of normality." Mrs Giddings will appear again at magistrates court on Monday as part of normal procedure, when it is anticipated the case will be adjourned for six to eight

Karli was found after 14 hours and returned to her parents, Karl Hawthorne and his partner, Tanya, last Saturday. Mother and daughter were allowed home from hospital on Tuesday, travelling with a po-

Louise Jury

Domestic tantrums keep spotlight on Sara

her husband.

"If the prime minister were to have seen what you did to his shoes, wine delivered to the residence in he would have butchered you," she screamed, as she hurled a pair of her husband's shoes that she considered improperly shined at Rosi Perstai, her personal secretary, year-old daughter from his first Rachel Yaakov, who for 30 years was quoted as saying by the daily marriage. Last year, he even had worked as a domestic servant in the prime minister's resideoce.

home, though still paid by the Israeli state - one of a growing list of casualties of a Sara Netanyahu tantrum. Since her husband took

Sara Netanyahu is once more un- office 18 months ago she has fired treaty search Ms Shaw's suitcase in der attack for bullying her staff, her three nannies and two secretaries case she had stolen anything. An bodyguards, her hairdresser and and become the most famously un-eyewitness said: "Sara instructed popular Israeli first lady ever.

case it was poisoned. "It didn't mat-Yediot Aharanot.

Most stories by former or curconsiderate, authoritarian and neurotic. When she fired Tanya Shaw, her first nanny, last year for burning the soup, she had her sec-

her to shake every piece of cloth-Once she insisted her staff taste ing, even the nanny's used under-

The most serious allegation is ter to her that I die, the important that she forced Mr Netanyahu to thing was that she gets her wine," hreak all contact with Noa, his 19stopped support payments for her. until forced to resume them by the Ms Yaakov, 60, now sits at rent employees show her as in-threat of legal action. The prime minister now only meets Noa late at night at his office and the meet-

ings are kept secret from his wife. Patrick Cockburn, Jerusalem

Woodward judge honoured for 'brave' decision to free convicted nanny

Judge Hiller Zobel likes the media, but ward ten days earlier. Not only that, but when he delivered the final coup de having slashed the verdict to one of theatre in the Louise Woodward trial last manslaughter, Judge Zobel set Woodward mooth by letting her go. he vowed never free on time already served of 279 days, to talk about it publicly. He may find the The murder conviction carried a mandaresolution hard to keep.

On Thursday night, the 65-year-old judge found himself under the glare of the lights as he received an unexpected award. It was the Annual Brass Gavel Award given by the Plymouth County Bar Association in Massachusetts.

The award is bestowed on a single judge each year considered to have demonstrated the bench. Three guesses what the tricky decision was in this instance.

vision audiences on both sides of the Atlantic - by overruling the murder-in-thesecond-degree verdict delivered by the jury in the trial of British nanny Louise Woodtory sentence of at least 15 years without

"I am honoured and humbled to be here and to feel the warmth of your re-ception," Judge Zobel told his hosts at the prize ceremony.

"You know, judging is a funny business. You are expected to be perfect the first day on the job and to improve consisteotly special courage in making a decision on thereafter. And it's true that we have to make difficult decisions."

Who was surely not celebrating the Bar It was on 10 November that Judge Zo-bel stunned the legal world—and giant tele-Sunil Eappen, the parents of eight-monthold Matthew Eappen who died while in the care of Woodward last February.

David Usborne, New York

UPDATE

EDUCATION

Students apply for more loans

The number of students applying for government loans rose from 59 per cent to 64 per cent of those eligible in the year 1996-1997.

The Student Loans Company annual report for the past academic year shows that just over 590,000 loans were paid ont, an increase over the previous year of around 30,000 borrowers.

Three years ago, the proportion of eligible students taking out loans was less than half. There was a 3 per cent increase in the number of borrowers who were

allowed to defer repayment of their loans. Just over 9 per cent of borrowers who had oot applied to defer repayment and who had missed two or more consecutive payments were officially classified as being in default. The compony says that it is paying out loans more quickly. The percentage paid out within 21 days of an application went up up from 96 per

cent to 99.7 per cent. Around £877m was paid out in loans and the average amount of money borrowed rose from £1,252 to £1,487. The student loan company, set up in 1989, is the non-profit-making

organisation which administers the loan scheme. Ministers are proposing to collect future loan repayments through the

LIFESTYLE

Inland Revenue.

Girl power stops outside car bonnet

Girl power has not reached the world of car maintenance, according to a

survey released yesterday. Nineteen out of twenty British women rely on their partners or their local garage to look after their car, the survey for Halfords, the car accessories retailer, found. Most women do not feel confident in doing even the simplest maintenance jobs. Half the womeo questioned said they never checked tyre pressure, even though there are more than 40,000 successful prosecutions every year for faulty tyres; 46 per cent said they never checked or topped up their oil and water, and 91 per cent had never changed a battery. Five per ceot said they did not know how to open the bonnet and 40 per cent claimed they would rather do the washing-up.

Chris Smith, a spokesman for Halfords, said the findings showed a distinct lack of "girl power". But hasic car maintenance is not the complicated job that most women imagine." Lack of confidence and basic knowledge were shown to be the primary reasons for women not looking after their cars, and the store has produced a series of car maintenance manuals to help. They have been hailed as "revolutionary" by the Plain

iparty s



Mobile irritation over phone pests

One in three of us has been annoyed by the mobile menace at some time and only one in 25 says there are no places which should be off limits to mobile phone users.

Trains, buses and cars are amongst the places where people most want mobile phones banned.

Almost a thousand people were questioned for the NOP survey on mobile phones commissioned by Tandy, the high-street electrical retailer, and the reaction to their use in most public places was a thumbs-down. Nearly 40 per cent had been positively annoyed by someone using a mobile on a bus or train. Just over half that number had taken exception to phone users in a restaurant or café, and one in four people said they were annoyed by someone taking or making a call in the car.

Men are slightly more likely than women to object to mobile phone use and the most complaints recorded are in the London area, where the most mobile phones are. Sixty-nine per cent of those asked in the survey most mobile phones are. Sixty-tune per cent of those are seen as off limb say there should be a ban on the use of the phones in cars and the authorized per cent for huses and trains respectively. Restaurants are seen as off limper cent for huses and a quarter want the phones barred from pubs, too.

Andrew Fryatt, managing director of Tandy, said: "Mohile phones can Andrew Fryatt, managing onector of rating, said. Ivaliance partial source of be a real boon for many people, but they are also a potential source of

Beigum (francs) 58.71 Canada (\$) 2.30 Cyprus Ipounds) 0.83 Denmark (kroner) 10.89 France (francs) 9.50 Germany (marks) 2.85 Greece (drachmei) 450.42 Hong Kong (\$) 12.44 Telebrat (s) 12.44	apan (yen) Alta (lira) Netherlands (guilders) Norway (kroner) Ortugal (escudos) pain (pesetas) weden (kroner) witzerland (francs) Urkey (lira) JSA (\$)	217 0 3. (1. 289 239, 12. 2 320, 1.
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ZITS

You kn by Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman HECTOR HAS THIS MOST EXCELLENT IDEA WE BUY AN OLD JUNKER JUST US OUR GUITARS, AND A THIRST FOR ADVENTURE! FIX IT UP OURSELVES, AND WHEN WE GET OUR DRIVER'S YOU NEAN, HOWARE WE GOING TO GET THEM TO STAY HOWARE WE GOINGTO GET LICENSES, WE TAKE OFF!

3/NEWS

How a spark in a Burger King led to national chaos

The world's busiest international airport was last night starting to return to normal after a day of chaos caused by a fire. Rundeep Ramesh and Kim Sengupta report the drama at Heathrow.

or more loans

Outside car bong

tiver phone pa

the partie Sport & parties

It probably started with a spark in a clogged air vent above Burger King's kitchens. Within seconds, flames were licking their way along the web of air ducts in the terminal's roof. In scenes reminiscent of a disaster movie, flames leapt from the top of Terminal One. According to some witnesses, the arcs of fire flew "40 feet up in the

But a full-scale catastrophe was never realised. Less than 12 hours after the first alarm at 4.40am, the airport was running virtually normally. Of the 150 people - at least 40 of whom were passengers - who were in the terminal at the time, none were injured.

The airport's own fire crews and the London Fire Service arrived within five minutes of the blaze starting and more than 100 firefighters were involved in tackling the fire.

A British Airports Authority spokesman said the fire had been contained by a £1m fireproof membrane in the terminal roof which had restricted the

Graham Holgate, a Fire Service Divisional Officer, said: The area of the fire was confined to 200 metres of ducting. Part of the roof was damaged and about 20 per cent of the roof plantroom there was also a certain amount of smoke

rector for the British Airports Authority at Heathrow, said the said: "There is nothing coming incident would be closely studied "to see if any lessons can be learnt." He added: "It seems, however, that emergency plans we already have coped adequately with this."

Last night, the cost was being measured not in financial losses hut in the delays suffered by the thousands of passengers expecting to travel yesterday and the miles of clogged roads surrounding the airport.

In that sense, the devastation was very real. More than 300 flights to Terminal One, which handles domestic. Irish and European flights, had been cancelled or diverted, and thousands of passengers were jammed in Heathrow's three other terminals, 15 miles west of central London.

Dozens of incoming flights were diverted to Stansted, or

Southampton. British Airways, the worst affected airline had to cancel around 200 Terminal One flights, and only managed to resume flying yesterday af-

British Midland operated a limited inbound-only service into Stansted airport until yesterday afternoon. SAS, the Scandinavian airline, said 11 flights from Copenhagen, Denmark, were diverted and came back empty, the passengers either trapped at Heathrow or abandoning the trip.

Although the fire did not spread, there were still hourlong delays to departures from Terminals Two, Three aod Four, while arrival delays var-

During the morning, the police closed a vital road access tunnel - for three hours - linking the M4 to the airport and within 15 minutes a five-mile tailback developed.

"It was unfortunate timing for us as the tunnel was closed for at least an hour after 7.30 and this was when the staff were trying to come into work," said a spokesman for BAA.

British Airways said it cancelled three long-haul flights, to Tokyo, Los Angeles and San Francisco, because many passengers failed to show up, apparently caught in traffic jams that built up oo the M4 and other roads leading to Heathrow.

When passengers were allowed back into the terminal after its reopening, there was little evidence of damage apart from slight smoke-staining to the ceiling. But fire service investigators said they helieved equipment in the ceiling cavity may have been damaged.

Many passengers complained of a lack of help. Annony Truman 57 from Putney Roger Cato, managing di- south west London, who was trying to fly to Bilbao in Spain, up on the screens and I just don't know whether I'm queuing in vain. People are being polite but nobody knows anything."

It could have been much worse. Around 70,000 people use Terminal One every day. "It was extremely fortunate that the fire was very early in the day. Two hours later the terminal would have been packed and there could have been a chaotic evacuation," said Professor Ed Galea, director of the fire safety engineering group at the University of Greenwich in south-east London.

It is estimated that the damage will run to hundreds of thousands of pounds. The London Fire Service and British Airports Authority will both conduct inquiries.

Leading article, page 20



How other airports

NEWCASTLE Airport said people who were due to catch a flight to

news bulletins and were ringing the

irport rather than just burning up.

The morning and evening flights to London from LEFDS-BRADFORD

Airport and EAST MIDLANDS Airpor

STANSTED SOON

took more than 10 diverted flights from

flights from Geneva

were to land at

were put on standby for incoming

flights diverted from Heathrow.

felt the effects

Traffic chaos around Heathrow LONDON Tunnel to Terminals One, Two and Three was closed between 6.00 and 9.00am, The busiest time of the day (2) M25 and M4 blocked with traffic for several miles either side of junction 15 3 Flights began departing from Terminal 1 at 3pm



IN MONDAY'S INDEPENDENT



INTERVIEW **Deborah Ross** feels the spirit of Christmas with **Britt Eckland**



SPORT Chris Wright, the owner of **QPR** and Wasps, tells of his first year as a sporting entrepreneur

HEATHROW NEARLY NORMAL

Passengers travelling on British Alrways flights should face little or no difficulty at Heathrow over the weekend, the airline said last night.

BA is the biggest carrier out of Heathrow and runs about 70 per cent of the flights out of Terminal One, The airline is

be some "minor delays" in the morning, the service should be back to normal by midday.

The minor delays in the morning, say BA, are due to the fact that around 100 incoming flights were cancelled yesterday. Although the incoming flights resumed at 3pm, the delay

British Midland, the second biggest carrier out of Terminal promised "additional services" to cope with the extra

The other airlines operating from Heathrow also hope to have a full schedule of flights over the weekend. BAA, owners of the airport, advised passengers to check

Chaos at GLASGOW as alrlines told travilers that

At BELFAST two

All flights from DUBLIN to Heathrow

expected to run 240 incoming and outgoing flights today. The airline has assured passengers that although there may

Passengers with Inquiries are advised to call especially set up national hot-line number 0345 222 III.

would have a "knock-on" effect on the early part of today.

One, said that it would be running a normal service and even

with their airline before setting off for the airport.

Police watchdog to condemn Met over Lawrence murder inquiry

A report into police handling of the Stephen Lawrence murder will contain stinging criticism. Michael Streeter, Legal Affairs Correspondent, says the inquiry into the stabbing of the black teenager will re-ignite a sensitive subject with wide implications.

The Police Complaints Authority report is certain to be controversial with its attack on the way the Metropolitan Police initially handled the murder of Stephen Lawrence.

While it is not expected to uphold the belief of the 18-year old's family that racial prejudice underscored the police attitude. The Independent has learnt it will include trenchant attacks on the force's early reaction to the crime. Ministers will study it carefully for any evidence that some police forces and units are only paying lip service to good race relations practice.

The teenager was stabbed to death at a bus shelter in Eltham, south-east London, four years ago by a gang of white youths. Last year the Lawrence family brought an unsuccessful private prosecu-

tion against five white youths. The PCA investigation was carried out by the Deputy Chief Constable of Kent,



Stephen Lawrence: murdered in racist attack by white youths

Bob Ayling, and a team of ten officers. A spokeswoman for the force said their findings, completed on 30 November. were provisional. She added: "There is still work to be done."

Some senior Met officers are thought to be unhappy about the report. Officers point out that 2,600 people and 500 statements were taken during their investigation and 70 possible suspects investigated. Police sources say the report is to be

published in Parliament on Monday by Jack

a PCA inquiry the entire report, and not just its conclusions, will be published. The fiodiogs will be used to help the public loquiry ordered by Mr Straw and to

Straw, the Home Secretary, Unusually for

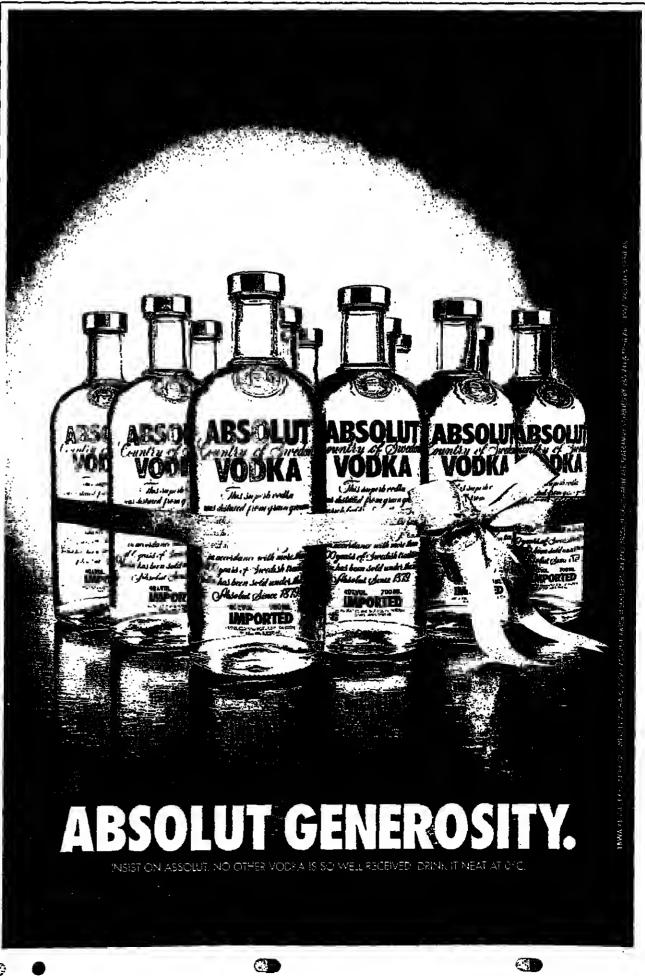
he conducted by Sir William Macpherson of Cluy, which will start in February. Stepheo's parents, Neville and Dorcen Lawrence, have been deeply unhappy

about the early police attitude towards their son's murder. Mrs Lawrence said earlier this year: "Shock and the horror just wasn't there. They gave us the impression that they believed black families are always into crime. It has made Stephen's killing even more unbearable."

The evidence given at the public inquiry. including any given by his killers, cannot be used in a criminal prosecution. In some cases witnesses may also be allowed to remain anonymous. Though this may mean there will never be a successful prosecution of Stephen's killers, it will at least mean that the full story of how - and why - he died and why his murderers escaped justice can be discovered.

In February an inquest in Southwark. south London, found that the student was unlawfully killed in an "unprovoked racist attack" by live white youths.

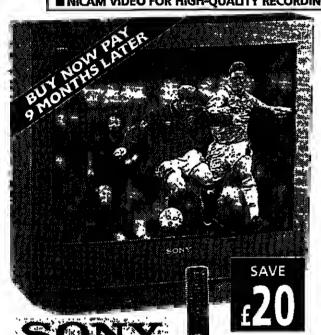
At the time family lawyers said they would take civil action against any officers found negligent by the PCA report.





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Firms delight in glow of party success

For an increasing number of companies the party season means lot more than warm white wine, bowls of peanuts and a grope in the stationery cupboard. Paul McCann seeks out the people who make sure your party is one to remember.

In the early hours of this morning bleary-eyed bankers and their clients staggered out of the Park Lane Hilton after a Christmas party that has become a byword in the City for fun and excess.

The host was Mitsuhishi Finance which supplied its 500 guests with a three-course meal before turning the hotel into a casino. Dancing followed, and at midnight the party became a breakfast bar and anyone who wanted it could have a full

cooked hreakfast. When the partygoers wanted to leave, taxis and chauffeurs were on hand to take them how to throw a party.

Such is the demand for a paryour company and outdn your rivals that professional party organisers are mushrooming like no time since the Eighties.

Peters and Beech. "And it's not just quantity, its quality." As an example. Mr Peters cites how fashion house Prada this year recreated the swish Sobo midst of a party for 2,000 pepple. The waiters would take reservations for different times during the party and serve up authentic Quo Vadis food.

"You need to spend between £100,000 and £200,000 to really get your company talked ers. They were wary of signing about," says Sara Bionstein a film deal with us. After they who has produced parties for Channel 4 and Selfridges,

rainbow-dyed sheep arrive in pink Cadillacs; for Channel 4, she created a post-apocalypse landscape inside Battersea Powwherever they wanted to go. er Station; and for Selfridges, money we would take - after the

The signal Mitsubishi is she recreated a Busby Berkley sending out is that it is a success. dance routine on a four-floor That it is fun and that it knows escalator using 150 dancers and actresses in full costume.

Other memorable parties ty that will say something about this year included Channel 5's £100,000 bash where 1,100 guests were entertained by eight bands on two stages. They were filled with sausages and mash, "Business is bonming," says vodka and cranberry cocktails Nigel Peters of party producers and if they got bored they could watch any one of a dozen specially created peepshows.

These contained S&M shows, hikini-clad dancing girls and one where guests could try restaurant Quo Vadis in the to wash the body paint off a model using water pistols.

Danielle Ney, who has responsibility at Channel 5 for its parties, believes they pay they own way. "We had a big party before the Channel launched to which we invited Warner Brothsaw the party they saw that we were a major player. That we For Benetton, she had 20 were exciting and fresh and after the party they wanted to do business with us. The advertising agencies that came were increasing their forecast of the



Flat out: some Christmas parties are being used by firms to signal their success

Photograph:

party. It also helped to convince the TV talent that we invited that we were something special ...

"You need to know why you're having a party. If it's not part of a strategic plan, don't

VOUCHER PRICE Yorkshire heads Christmas spending

An average £654 per person will be spent on food, presents and entertainment this Christmas, it was claimed yesterday. Stephen Goodwin looks at two surveys which show consumers in a buoyant mood but wary of borrowing.

All those jokes about Yorkshire parsimony - the deep pockets £500," concluded NOP. and short arms - are not true after all. The Tykes spend more money on Christmas than anyone eise m.Britam.

Save and Prosper, some 41 per cent of Yorkshire folk will spend more than £500 this Christmas compared to 32 per cent for the population as a whole.

The finding is at least par-

Spending Report, Though the geographical area and sums are higger, Amex found "Northerners" to be the big festive spenders, expecting to splash out an average of £671 on food, gifts and entertaining, compared with a national average of £654. NOP put the average at £568.90.

However, where the surveys really disagree is over who spends least. "The West Country are the real Scrooges, with per cent spending under

Not so, said Amex. In a finding that will give deep satisfaction to Northerners, the card According to research by the affluent South-east as the recent interest rate rises. Some NOP for the investment group meanest. Consumers there expect to spend an average of £607 on food, gifts and entertaining.

> The inhabitants of the most well-heeled corner of the country spend an average £367 on Christmas presents compared to

leave shopping until the last minute.

Overall, the Amex report, conducted by British Market Research Bureau International, found consumers feeling more confident about their economic situation. Three quarters of the 767 adults surveyed said they were well or better off compared to last year and 40 per cent expected their financial situation to improve in the next 12 months.

However, consumers seem to he adopting a careful, rather than a carefree approach to spending. The recession of the early 1990s lingers in the pub-85 per cent said they would only huy what they could afford and 72 per cent said they would rather do without than take a

"What we are seeing as the festive season approaches is a presumably a high proportion tially confirmed by the latest a national average of £378, new consumer mindset," said

American Express Consumer They are also more likely to Cary Cooper, professor of psychology at University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology.

"The Brits who are working longer and harder than anywhere else in Europe see Christmas as a time to reward themselves for their hard work throughout the world.

"But although there is a growing sense of confidence in the UK ... there is still a strong element of careful spending. This is in contrast with the late Eighties where the spendspend-spend culture prevailed."

the professor said. Not content with stoking divisions between the regions, company fingered the people of lie mind, perhaps refreshed by the Amex report also found a gender gap in spending. Whether out of generosity or extravagance, men claim to spend on average £150 more over Christmas than women. One in 10 men expect to spend more than £1.000 on gifts alone - and

of them are in Yorkshire.

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A nation taking hangovers to work

Do you hang over your desk at work with a thumping head and a mouth like a badger's hindquarters? Has your boss been lurching around the office with bloodshot eyes and foul breath? It's part of a trend, says Barrie Clement: hangovers are costing British industry about eight million lost days a year.

From the boardroom to the shopfloor. people seem to be taking to alcohol to relieve increasing stress at work, with professional employees outdrinking more junior staffers.

An NOP survey published today

them relax, compared to around 45 per cent of all workers. But with Christmas looming. re-

searchers found that most employees are in denial over the effects of alcohol. A "staggering" 39 per cent of British

males admitted they had felt ill at work due to too much drink the previous day, they discovered. Some 18 per cent admitted taking time off because they were incapable of turning up. However, 79 per cent claimed that in the run-up to Christmas, alcohol "does not in any way" affect their performance.

The poll, conducted on behalf of Guardian Employee Benefits, which offers insurance to companies for absence. showed that nearly a quarter of offices allow drinking on the premises on some ocshows that nearly 60 per cent of "middle" casions thoughout the year. Two-thirds of

class" employees regularly drink to help workplaces had no policy on alcohol abuse, nor offer counselling to those who abuse drink

> Brian Rawle, marketing manager of the insurance company, said it was clear that staff were sometimes incapacitated by drink and that it not only affected their own performance, but that of others.

> After a long period of "downsizing". which had affected most parts of industry, companies expected people to work to full capacity: alcohol impaired their ability to do so. It was not a question of being a "killjoy" before Christmas or encouraging managers to "spy". Mr Rawle attacked the "blinkered" attitude of many employers to the damaging impact of alcohol. He pointed out that that the Health Education Authority estimated that problem drinking was costing British

industry more than £1bn a year.

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Police fear 'date-rape drug' danger for women

A drug which induces a carefree state leaving women unable to resist unwanted sexual advances, has been blamed for dozens of date rapes in America. Alexandra Williams says police are investigating fears that the trend has reached Britain.

"Slip a 2mg dose in one beer and a woman will be put flat on her hack in a moaning state of carnal hliss, to waken with no memories of the previous night."

These are the instructions being circulated on the Internet on how to use Rohypnol and the reason why the drug, nicknamed Roofie, has been described as the perfect designer

date-rape drug. Tasteless and scribed drugs but is easily ob-odourless, the tiny purple tablet tained from private clinics. can be slipped into a drink and within 10 minutes the victim will feel drunk and dizzy and at the mercy of their attacker.

Rohypuol is a tranquilliser 10 times stronger than Valium and its effects last for 10 hours. Inhibitions are lost and the taker is left with little memory of the had been raped. Recently the experience. Flashbacks of the assault usually occur days later. The likelihood of charging

the alleged rapist, let alone finding him guilty are virtually nil. It takes just four hours for all traces of the drug to leave the bloodstream and it cannot be . detected in urine after 72 hours.

Rohypnol's medical name is flunitrazepam and is prescribed for severe back pain or insomnia. The drug, manufactured by Hoffman-LaRoche since 1975, is not on the NHS list of pre-

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may drug women to get sexual tained from private clinics. More than 1 million patients in Sergeant Clive Driscoll, of 80 countries take Rohypnol

particularly in Scotland. Al-

laxant drug may attract pae-

Chief Superintendent Peter

dophiles and gay rapists.

Scotland Yard's Crime Policy every day and the usual dosage Unit, who has been investigatis half to one milligramme. • ing the drug for six months, is The drug was banned in meeting a number of scientists America in March last year afnext week to discuss the problem. "We wish people to be campuses, reported that they more aware," he said. Hoffman-LaRoche, which drug has been found on the

will be at the meeting, is lookhlack market in this country, ing to reformulate the drug to prevent its misuse. "We find it very disturbing that a criminal though, so far, complainants have been women, anti-drug might he using a legitimate medical therapy to sexually as-sault women," said spokescampaigners fear the muscle reomen Michelle Stanley. The company has developed

Gammon, vice-president of the a Rohypnol tablet that dissolves more slowly and releases a hluc Police Superintendents' Assocolour. The shape and colour of ciation, said: "We don't want to be alarmist hut ... Once people the tablet have also been changed. The new form of the find it's easy to ohtain and administer, then more people drug is not yet on the market.



Remembrance: Frances Lawrence, widow of Philip Lawrence, the headmaster murdered in 1995, with Jack Straw at a ceremony in Scotland where she gave awards to young people in her husband's memory Photograph: Rui Xavier

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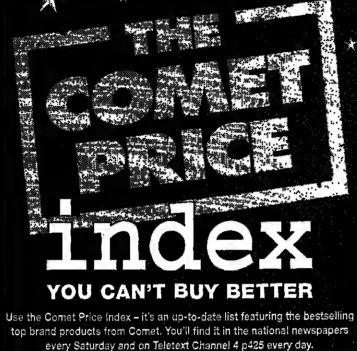
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Bank staff refuse to work on Christmas Eve

Industrial unrest at high over the banks' decision to street banks spread to the open on 2 January, a Scottish Midland vesterday when staff voted to walk out on Christ-

mas Eve. The 24-hour stoppage nt Midland, in protest at management's decision to stay open all day on 24 December, official, said banks were empcoincides with n fourth daylong strike at Barclays where employees are angry over arrange a mortgage or take the imposition of a performance related pay system.

In Scotland, more than 10,500 members of the Banking Insurance and Finance voted in favour of the action Union at the Clydesdale bank, TSB and Royal Bank of Scotland are also being balloted on strike action on 2 January. Staff walked out last year

Footballer fined for attack An ex-professional footballer told that Francis and Mr was ordered to pay £2,750 compensation yesterday for

wounding Paul Stephenson. He was also ordered to complete 150 hours community

service and pay £50 costs.

Francis, of Leeds, played for Sheffield United and Burnley before joining local

bar in September celebrating breaking a team mate's jaw. the manager's birthday. John Francis, 34, pleaded Francis was having an arguguilty at Pudsey magistrates ment with his girlfriend outcourt, West Yorkshire, to side when Mr Stephenson left and Francis hit him. Catherine Dowson for the

Stephenson were at the club's

bank holiday. In a 36 per

cent turnout, members of the

union at Midland voted by

3,250 to 2,550 for industrial ac-

tion, n margin of 56 per cent.

ty last Christmas Eve after

funchtime: "Nobody wants to

out n loan on Christmas Eve."

agement said that only one in

ten of the total workforce had

and he anticipated that there

would be no "material" affect

- Barrie Clement

on the service.

A spokesmnn for man-

Alan Scrimgour, a union

prosecution, said: "The blow knocked him to the floor and fractured the complainant's jaw in two places."

In mitigation the defence league side Farsley Celtic, said it was a one-off incident near Leeds. The court was that was out of character act.

Death threat made to MP

Police are seriously investigating a death threat telephoned to a Labour MP who had urged farmers to call off a protest rally. The anonymous message

was left on the House of Commons answerphone of Exeter's Labour MP, Ben Bradshaw, on Tuesday night.

It came after he had urged farmers to cancel a protest mnrch planned for today when police said it would mean withdrawing six officers

from the month-long hunt for the killer of city schoolgirl Kate Bushell, 14. The regional National

Farmers Union branch vesterday decided to call off the march in view of the "public sensitivities" over drawing police away from the murder hunt. Mr Bradshaw welcomed the NFU's decision justified his comments, and warned that death threats would not help the campaign for the ban on beef exports, to be lifted,

Road-test engineer jailed for causing death crash

An engineer was yesterday But she hit out at the sentence iailed for five months and banned from driving for two years for causing the death by dangerous driving of a motorist while road-testing a car.

Klaus Menk, 47, a steering engineer with General Motors Europe, was fold by Recorder Alan Wilkie QC at Luton Crown Court that he had been guilty of a "single, momentary gross misjudgement" which had caused the death of Richard Longworth in January this year.

Menk, from Frankfurt, was overtaking a car on a hadly tit country road when he crashed head-on with Mr Longworth, 39, the editor of Get Motoring magazine.

Mr Recorder Wilkie also said that he hoped General Motors would reconsider the merits of road-testing cars on husy roads at night.

His comments were welconned by Mr Langworth's girltriend Mary Williams who founded the Brake mad safety organisation after her mother was killed in a road accident.

saying it was just one-twentieth of the maximum penalty of 10 years for causing death by dangerous driving and sent out the wrong messages to reckless dri-

Menk was found guilty last month of causing Mr Longworth's death. Sentence had been deferred until yeslerday.

He was one of three General Motors engineers who were test-driving cars on a 10-mile circuit of public roads used by the company.

Mr Recorder Wilkie said that hoth he and the jury felt that Menk's driving had fallen well below what was expected.



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Microsoft given bloody nose by browser monopoly ruling

Bill Gates and his computer software giant, Microsoft, put on a brave face yesterday after a US judge ruled that the company had unfairly exploited the virtual monopoly enjoyed by its Windows 95 system and instructed an immediate change in marketing practices. But while the shortterm cost to Microsoft is limited, the long-term damage to the reputation of Mr Gates may be more severe. Mary Dejevsky reports.

The US government had brought the case against Microsoft, claiming that the company had broken the terms of a two-year old legal agreement designed to preserve open competition in the US software market. Late on Thursday, several weeks earlier than expected, the judge, Thomas Penfield Jackson, announced his verdict: a 90 per cent victory for the government and a corresponding defeat for Microsoft.

The judge ruled that Microsoft "shall cease and desist ... from the practice of licensing the use of any Microsoft personal computer operating system software (including Windows 95 or any successor version thereof), on the condition that the computer manufacturer also install its hrowser software". In other words, Microsoft may not require computer-makers to accept Microsoft's hrowser, Internet Explorer as a condition for taking its Windows 95 operating programme.

The ruling is a preliminary one. The judge also appointed a specialist in the field, a law professor, Lawrence Lessig, to consider all the facts and report by 31 May.

The ruling that Microsoft may not link its two products in the interim, however, grate the browser. represents a further defeat for the company. Both Microsoft and its chief rival in the browser market, Netscape Communications Corp, with its Netscape Navigator, are set to compete for expiring licensing agreements in this period, and Netscape feared (and government lawyers argued) that Microsoft would try to crowd it out of the

and would allow Netscape to compete to have its browser pre-installed by computer makers. A Microsoft spokesman said it believed the legal review would vindicate the company. "We're confident," he said, that once the court has reviewed all the facts it will agree that Microsoft complied fully with the consent decree and that Microsoft's integration of Internet Explorer with Windows 95 is good for consumers."

The one consolation for Microsoft is that the judge denied the government's request that it be considered in contempt of the 1995 agreement. This could have made it liable for fines of up to \$1m a day.

The chairman of Microsoft, Bill Gates, was spreading his company's gospel in Peking when the ruling was announced and declined to comment beyond saying that the competition with Netscape would continue. "They'll have a new version, we'll have a new version. It's a healthy competition that you expect in the computer software market," he told his student audience. "It's not a husiness where anybody has a guaranteed postition - even Microsoft, with all its success," he said, forecasting that speech-recognition was the next computer frontier. But the benevolent image of Mr Gates is probably gone for good, This is the second ruling against the com-

pany recently - the first found in favour of Sun Microsystems, which had complained that Microsoft was unfairly using and altering its Java system for its own purposes. It prevents the company from fully exploiting the dominance of Windows during a crucial period. And it deprives Microsoft of its reputation as a new-style consumer-friendly company, an undoubted marketing asset in the past.

Yesterday some analysts predicted that Microsoft would have to delay the launch of its new version of Windows, expected in mid-1998, because it had planned to inte-

For the US government, the head of the Justice Department's anti-trust division, Joel Klein, said consumer choice had been reestablished. "No consumer should be denied the browser of its choice because Microsoft made their computer vendor an offer that their vendor couldn't refuse."

Shares in Microsoft Corp fell by 1.31 dolmarket. The vice-president of Netscape. lars to 137.75 in early trading in New York Lori Mirek, said the decision restored a yesterday - less than some had predicted -'level playing field" in the browser market while Netscape gained 2.50 to 28.75.



Clubbing together: Bill Gates and President Bill Clinton in happier times

Why it is important that a judge put brakes on cyber-juggernaut

Everywhere you look, Microsoft is there. tion law will manage to prevent the comsonal computers sold today. It has four-fifths target markets. of the market for word-processing programmes. It is dominant in new sales of software for running computer networks in companies. It has invested in cahle, multimedia, on-line commerce and movie-making. Bill Gates, chairman and founder of the computer software giant, is even invading outer space with a plan to launch nearly 300 low-orbit satellites that will beam

Internet communications around the world, This is why the ruling by a United States judge, that Microsoft has ahused its monopoly power in one area, is so significant. This could be the first time that compeo-

The US has had tougher legislation than the UK against the abuse of monopolies ever since John D Rockefeller grew overmighty with Standard Oil. The American admiration for hig business has a limit. The once-dominant IBM lost a lengthy anti-trust case in the early Eighties. It was competition policy, too, that hroke up telephone company AT&T into regional companies, and opened the long-distance phone market to competitors like MCI and Sprint.

The US machinery puts Britain's feehle safeguards against powerful monopolies to

The question is whether the new ruling with the main alternative, Netscape, and licence to use Sun's Java computer lan-Its software operates 94 per cent of all per- pany from gaining dominance in one of its will succeed in preventing Microsoft from threatened to corner the market for the soft- guage. Java is crucial to preserving comeliminating consumer choice in areas ware that helps people find their way petitinn. It is a programming language

BY DIANE **COYLE**

is a crucial unconquered territory, and one Bill Gates desperately wants to dominate. Microsoft's "Explorer" browser for accessing the Internet had rapidly caught up

a hig provider of Internet communications, after America Online. And Bill Gates has invested heavily in the content of what people might want to access, with the creation of an on-line magazine, investment in a film company, and, through the purchase of digital rights, to images of paintings in the National Gallery and the Hermitage Museum, the notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci, and

a 16-million image photographic library. Microsoft also faces a more crucial legal case. Sun Microsystems, another software company, accuses it of breaching its

created specifically to be used with any kind of computer operating system or software, and is making wildfire gains in the business computing market. With Java, you can use Windows alongside any other software. It is a kind of hi-tech glue.

Sun charges that Microsoft has altered Java, which it uses in the latest version of its Internet Explorer, in such a way that this essential compatibility with other software would not work. Microsoft has counter-sued Sun. The outcome of this battle will be just as important as the Internet browser war.

Winning the war of the Web

Microsoft's aim for almost two years has been to use the dominance of its Windows operating system - a set of interlocking programs which enable a PC to run word-processing programs, spreadsheets or databases - to jump-start the market share of Internet Explorer (IE), its browsing program for viewing the World Wide Web, discussion areas and for seuding e-mail.

Its chief rival, which was on the scene rather earlier, is Navigator, from Netscape Corporation of Mountain View, California. Netscape's lead of 18 months or so meant that by the time Microsoft had a usable browser. Netscape had an 80 per cent share of the small, but fast-growing market.

Why does a hrowser matter? First, it is the main tool for "surfing the Web" - moving between Web sites. If the Internet becomes the centre for electronic commerce that everyone claims it will, then it must be good if a browser is used to carry out that business.

Secondly, any software has "defaults" - the settings of parts of the program as it starts up. In a hrowser, a key one is the "Home page" - where the program takes you when it starts up. If lots of people visit your home page simply because they start the program, you can charge more to advertisers who huy space there. Many people never realise that they can change the default in seconds. So whenever they start the program, they are delivered to the site.

Navigator's default home page is the Netscape Weh site; that of IE, the Microsoft site. So far, so fair.

But peoples' tendency to stick with defaults also extends to the software on their machine. If your machine already has a browser, would you bother to get another? So Microsoft began issuing a simple ultimatum to PC manufacturers: include IE as standard software on your machine, or you can't have Windows95. Without Windows95, their machines would have no operating system - and so would be useless to the average user. They agreed to Bill Gates's demands.

Netscape's market share began falling dramatically, and the number of "hits" on Microsoft's home page began rocketing. Netscape cried foul. Microsoft responded that IE was "part of the operating system". This seemed odd, since it doesn't sell or market any other part of its operating system separately. Microsoft's argument looked thin; its tactics, vicious. The decision means that some equality will now he restored.

Charles Arthur, Science Editor

r fined for 2012ck

ingineer jailed death crash



Not just Saturdays. Not just Sundays. Now it's Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day, too.

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It might be snowing outside. But at least you can curl up by the fire, call up all your friends and relatives around the country, and chat away to your heart's content.

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Firefighters failed to spot murder victim in burned-out car

An investigation has been or- assault. Detectives believe he serious robbery offences. rear seat. The body was dis- may hold the key to the murder. covered 15 hours later by two

that police were told about the quaintance in Birmingham.

Detectives believe John Brosbeaten to death before the in an isolated track. Police day lunchtime. think he may have been the vickilling.A murder inquity is un-

The boys, aged 14 and 16, found the body when they went to examine the wreckage in

West Mercia Police revealed that Mr Brosoao, who was and served a jail seoteoce for known to have been involved in

dered after firefighters who was still involved in criminal acdoused a hlazing car failed to tivities and they intend to quiz some well known active spot a dead man lying on the his underworld cootacts who

Police are trying to piece to- criminal. gether Mr Brosoan's move-Officers from the Hereford ments after he left his partner, and Worcester Fire Brigade Anne Davis, at their home in were called to the fire on Learnington Spa, Warwickshire Wednesday eveoing, but it was at 10.45am oo Wednesday, saynot until Thursday lunchtime ing he iotended to visit an ac-

Firefighters were called out at 8.40pm on Wednesday to tacknao, 50, a father of three, was le a fire which wrecked his car. But police were only inhlack L-registered Ford Mon- formed that a body had beeo deo hatchhack was set oo fire found in the Mondeo oo Thurs-

"Mr Brosnan was giveo a vitim of ao uoderworld revenge cious and ferocious beating which quite clearly led to his death," said Detective Superiotendent lan Johnston, who is leading the murder hunt.

"He had extensive bruising to Weatheroak. Redditch. They hoth sides of his jaw, his eyes told a farmer who raised the and forehead and we are reasonably sure he was dead before the fire started.

"It's too early to speculate oo unemployed, had been in whether this was a revenge volved in armed robberics attack. But Mr Brosnan is

"He has been involved with criminals throughout the Midlands. He was not a low level

"Quite clearly we have to bear his background in mind and that will be one of our lines of ioquiry. We have to look at his associates to see if they give us any indications for the murder," Det Supt Johnston said.

"Mr Brosnan was not a man who always made his whereabouts known to his family," he

Detectives were carrying out house-to-house ioquiries in Leamingtoo Spa yesterday and police were still seeking to trace the acquaintance Mr Brosnan had intended to visit.

Det Supt Johnston said the murder inquiry had oot been hampered by the fire brigade's failure to find his body.

We may have expected that they could have found the body. ves," he said. "But I doo't believe significant forensic evideoce has heeo lost. Most of it was consumed by the fire



Cyberlove: Aki Maita, a 31-year-old Japanese housewife, holding Bandai's Tamagotchi - her own creations which took the children's toy world by storm; she is visiting the UK for the first time to introduce her latest pet, the space-travelling Tamagotchi Angel Photograph: Nicola Kurtz

Master of 'Maria Asumpta' loses manslaughter appeal

The owner and master of the sailing ship Maria Asumpto. which sank off the north Cornwall coast in 1995 with the loss of three crew, vesterday failed in an appeal against his triple manslaughter conviction.

Three Court of Appeal judges said they were left in no 'lurking doubt" about the safety of Mark Litchfield's coovic-

Litchfield, 56, who had been on bail pending appeal, was led away to serve the 18-month jail sentence imposed on him at Ex-

eter Crown Court in August. The rejection of his appeal as weicomed by relatives and died on ships owned by Litchfield - three on the Maria Asumpta and 19 on the square rigger Marques, which sank off

Bermuda 11 years earlier. "It is heart's ease to see jus-

tice being done," said Shirley Cooklin, who lost her 18-yearold soo Beo Bryant on the

After the judgment, Suzie Macfarlane, who lost her 19year-old daughter Emily on the Maria Asumpta, said: "I'm extremely glad it's all over - the saga has ended."

Ms Cooklin said: "It's been a tremendous straio to sit through and then to have to wait for the judgment. But I've waited 13 years for some sort of retributioo. Twenty-two people have died. My fear was there

would be further deaths." friends of 22 people who have Mr Justice Rougier and Mr Justice Astill dismissed argument by Litchfield's lawyers that allegations that he was grossly negligent and in breach of his duty of care towards his

evidence and should never have gone before the jury.

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The Crown had alleged that Litchfield set a dangerous course before the 137-year-old vessel was driveo towards treacherous rocks off Padstow. forcing him to rely oo his engines which he knew to be fuelled by contaminated diesel.

The engines failed and Litchfield could not steer out of trouble. His ship broke up on rocks at Rumps Point.

Eleveo survivors were rescued, but three people perished - ship's cook Anne Taylor, 50, from Wallingford, Oxford-Macfarlane, 19, of Felixstowe, Suffolk; and John Shannon, 24, the second engineer, from Queensland, Australia.

The sinking in 1984 of the Marques did not result in crimcrew were not supported by the

Cleveland detective put back in uniform

A detective in Cleveland police, where the policy of zero tolerance has attracted equal measure of praise and criticism, has been transferred to uniform duties, it was revealed

yesterday.

Detective Sergeant John McPherson, 51,

Middlesbrough CID has been moved from Middlesbrough CID to duties "elsewhere" in the force, said a

Earlier this mooth the head of Middlesbrough CID Detective, Superintendent Ray Mallon, seen as the architect of the new policing strategy, was suspended amid allegations of misconduct. He has strongly denied the claims. In October, two other detectives from the unit were suspended for allegedly supplying drugs to criminals in exchange for con-

The transfer of Mr McPherson, who had been with the CID for eight years and who has been a police officer for 31 years, is the first such move since Superintendent Adrian Roberts took over as new boss of the CID unit this week.

The spokeaman said: "A detective sergeant has been moved from Middleshrough CID, following the lauoch of an inquiry by the force's complaints and discipline branch into allegations of discipline and potentially criminal conduct."

- Michael Streeter, Legal Affairs Correspondent

18 years' jail for sex abuse scoutmaster

A paedophile scoutmaster who attacked young boys in his care was yesterday jailed for 18 years after being convicted of a string of serious sexual assaults.

Judge Michael Mott described David Stanley as a "predatory and aggressive paedophile" who had preyed oo "vulnerable" young boys during his time with the scouts and as a youth worker at a resideotial children's home. A jury at Worcester Crown Court convicted Stanley, 49, of Telford, Shropshire, of six counts of huggery, two of attempted buggery, eight counts of indecent assault, and one charge of possessing pornographic photographs with a view to distributing them oo the Internet.

Timothy Barnes QC, for the defence, told the court the offences had taken place in the 1970s wheo Stanley was a young man in his twenties. He had since married and had eojoyed a respectable family life with his wife and two children, who had to hear the humiliation and distress of his conviction.

The offences were committed against boys aged between 10 and 15, who were either scouts or boys at a privately run care home called Cotsbrook Hall in Shifnal, Shropshire, where Stanley worked as a care assistant. The home was owned by the company responsible for the Bryn Alyn home in Wrexham, north Wales, whose owner John Allen was jailed for six years for paedophile offences.

Good old British cuppa gets a revamp in a can

The British idea of a relaxing cuppa could be changed for ever with the launch of tea in a tin vesterday.

Hot cups of tea, coffee and chocolate will be on sale alongside traditional cans after four years of research to develop them.

The idea initially came from Japan where tea and coffee have been sold in cans for a number of years. This sector of the market accounts for 70 per

cent of canned drink sales, hands. Both the tea and coffee dwarfing soft drinks.

The different types of drinks will be stored in hot cabinets which keep the cans at between 55 - 57C - normal drinking temperature. Once heated,

they should be drunk within seven days for "optimum quality". The ring-pull cans are made from material similar to that of a soupean but are covered with polystytene labels which keep

come white.

Brooke Bond, who pioneered the drinks, said tea was the hardest drink to convert to can-form and eventually came up with a formula of freshly brewed PG Tips and milk powder.

The cans are being sold initially in the Greater Manchester area from the New Year.

the tea hot without hurning the Consumer Affairs Correspondent



9/BBC ROW

Elite's favourite show takes the flak from politicians

Tensions between politicians and the BBC have always existed and Today has borne the brunt of the flak. Louise fury looks at the lovehate relationship between the corporation's flagship news programme and governments.

Lord Tebbit once showed his irritation with the Today programme by arriving for an interview, pulling a duster from his pocket and waved it in front of the editor's face - just to dust off the hias, he joked.

And it was during the Thatcherite years of the Eighties that antagonism against the programme was at its height. Lord Tebhit, when Tory chairman, even set up a "bias monitoring" unit at Central Office to keep tabs on the BBC which he described as the "insufferable, smug, sanctimonious, naive, guilt-ridden, wet, pink orthodoxy of that sunset home of that third-

rate decade, the 1960s".

it was the late Brian Redhead those days. In one of the most memorable exchanges nn radio, the then Chancellor, Nigel Lawson, lost his temper under questioning over the economy and accused the broadcaster of being a life-long Labour supporter. Mr Redhead asked for a minute's silence "while you compose an apology for daring to suggest you know how I exercise my vote; and I shall reflect upon the death of your

monetarist policy". More recently, John Birt, the BBC's director-general, apologised to Brian Mawhinney, then Tory party chairman, after he complained that Kenneth Clarke, then Chancellor, was treated in an "openly hostile" way by Anna Ford last year.

Mr Humphrys, though, is the presenter who most frequently rattles guests today. Jonathan Aitken, the former MP, accused him of being an openly "partisan pugilist" and condemned the BBC as being the "Blair Broadcasting Corporation". For more than a decade, he has irritated and goaded normally pretty determined that John Humphrys may he politicians. Yet despite tense re- we can't be stopped."

Labour's hate figure now, but lations, it is a rash politician who feels able to relinquish air time who angered the Tories most in to the political enemy. Any "ban" would be unlikely to last long.

Although the Labour Party recently suggested that the Prime Minister was less dedicated to Today than most politicians, the programme remains an acknowledged agenda-setter.

Yesterday, the BBC was keen to point out that despite Labour's threat to withdraw cooperation, Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, was interviewed on Thursday morning and Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, yesterday. However, BBC2's Newsnight has had to fight to get ministers to appear since the election. During the Bernie Ecclestone/smoking row, no minister would appear. When this happened for a fourth night, the programme showed an empty

chair in the studio. A source at the programme said: "The Tories used to almost always put a minister up. There is no doubt that Labour try to kill the stories. They do interviews up until lunchtime and then say, 'No more,' in the hope that we'll drop the story. But we're



John Humphrys playing the cello. Politicians clearly think he should spend more time on his music, and less in the BBC's Today studio

Harriet Harman interview at heart of controversy

the controversy ran for almost five minutes on Wednesday morning. Harriet Harman was pressed by John Humphrys to say whether the lone-parent benefit cut was designed to force single mothers into work. The Secretary of State for Social Security refused to answer the question at least four times and during the exchanges Mr Humphrys interrupted her several times and talked over her.

The is part of the interview: John Humphrys: "There are many women in this country who have children under the age of five and who do not want to work. Are you saying to them 'we think you ought to work'?"

Harriet Harman: "There are many women with children under five who want to work and who lack affordable. high-quality child care."

Homphrys: "I am talking about those who don't want to work and I am asking you the question, are you saying to them, 'Ultimately it is our aim to get people like you into work." Is that what you are saying? It is a very straightforward question." Harman: "Well, I am giving you a very straightforward answer, John, which is that we are for the first time offering those lone mothers with children under five."

Humphrys: "No, you are oot answering the question, with the greatest of respect. You are answering your question. I am asking you to answer my questioo.

"Do you want these women ... you talk about ending a dependency culture, are you saying to women with young children who are Humphrys: "Harriet Harliving by themselves, we

The interview at the centre of would like you to work? Is that what you are saying?" Harman: "I am saying I would like for those women what they want for themselves and that means choice."

Humohrys: "Hang on, what they want, for many of them is you not to impose the cuts you are imposing to them." Harman: "They have had no choice in the past, because they have been given on help to work. The question is whether we invest £5 a week extra to help them on benefits, or whether we invest in helping them into work. And if they don't get into work. they will have that choice and they will get the same level of benefit for their child as mar-

ried women will get "I know we will look back



Harman: Under pressure

on this and think how odd it was we were championing the rights of lone mothers to bring up their children on benefit. It's hard to bring up your children on benefit. It's easier if you can do part-time work, or eveo full-time work, and actually have a better standard of living, and that's the direction in which we are going."

man, thank you very much."

direct

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Harsh words in exchange of letters

Edited extracts from the exchange of letters between David Hill and John Barton.

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Asumpta'

er appeal

years' jail for sex

ISP SCOutmaster

Dear John, The John Humphrys problem has assumed new proportions after this morning's interview with Harriet Harman. In response we have had a council of war and are now seriously considering whether, as a party, we will suspend co-operation when you make bids through us for Government ministers. Individual Government Departments will cootinue to make their own minds up but we will now give very careful thought to any bid to us, in order to make ab-

and the second of the first section

Harriet Harman was keen to be interviewed this morning ... in Government's decision ... In the Humphrys interrupted so much sirable in themselves? ... that she was never permitted to develop a single answer.

Frankly, none of us feel that this can go on ... I am sure your listeners don't want it. We can see oo beoefit to us ... We oeed to talk as this is now serious. Yours.

David Hill.

Dear David, Thank you for becomplaint about John solutely sure that your listeners Humphrys' interview with Harare not going to be subjected to riet Harman ... Your description a repeat of the ridiculous ex- of it as "a ridiculous exchange"

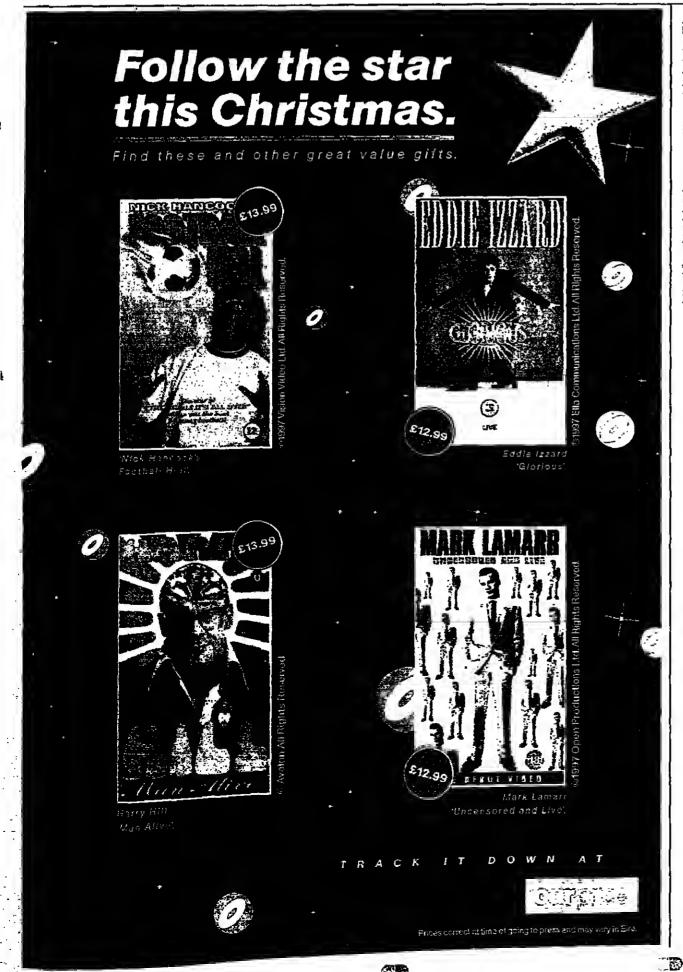
John was ... seeking a direct answer to a simple question: the knowledge that she would be were the cuts forced on the Govchallenged on the wisdom of the ernment by financial necessity or because the Secretary of event this failed to happen. State believed that they were de-

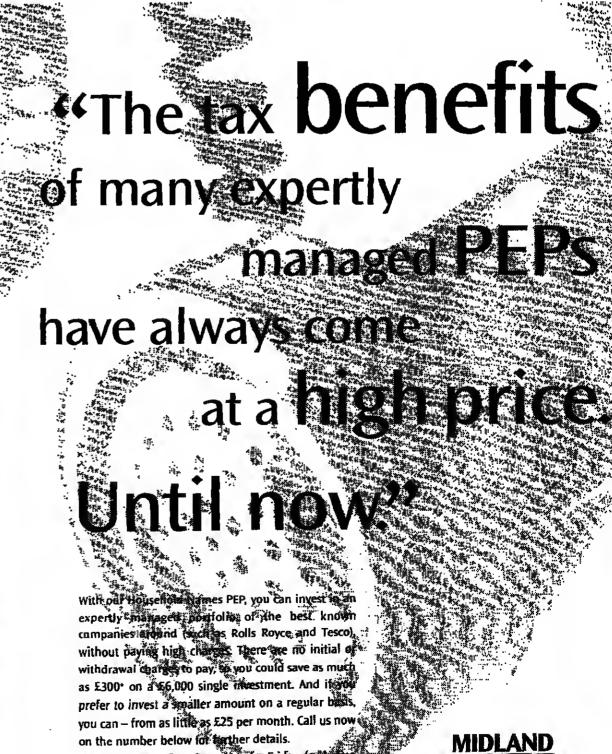
> I disagree with your suggestion that Ms Harman "was never permitted to develop a single Her first answer for instance

> was almost one minute loog, and later she explained at length the Government's strategy for helping lone parents to return to work.

We would obviously be very ing so frank in your letter of sorry if you decided to "suspend co-operation" ... The losers would be the listeoers.

Yours sincerely. Jon Barton Editor, Toda





Lines are open 8am-8pm Monday Friday Jeans

Bank Holidays) and 10am-2pm Saturday

Midland Bank

Eta shooting deals blow to hopes of end to Basque war

Basque separatists from Eta are being blamed for the fatal shooting of a conservative town councillor. Elizabeth Nash in Madrid says the killing has dealt a crushing blow to tentative hopes of bringing an end to Eta's violent campaign.

A masked gunman shot dead Jose Luis Caso on Thursday night, while he was drinking wine with friends in a bar in Irun near the French border.

The shooting held cruel echoes of a killing in July that brought millions of Spaniards on to the streets in protest. Mr Caso, 64, a member of the ruling right-of-centre Popular Party (PP), had received threats of "you are next" just days after Eta killed Miguel Anget Blanco in the summer. But he had refused the government's offer ed that the government would to give him bodyguards. "I am not afraid. If they want to come for me they know where to find me." he said recently.

Eta, which stands for Basque

a 29-year campaign for an independent Basque state. Caso was the 13th victim this year.

Jaime Mayor Oreja, the interior minister, condemned the shooting as a "revenge attack following recent sethacks". A similar attack last week on a PP councillor from San Sebastian was foiled by her hodyguard who was shot in the face and lost

Basque pacifist organisations called for protest vigils last night, and all Basque democratic parties called for a mass demonstration in San Sebastian this evening.

Mr Mayor Oreja flew to Irun to join the family of Mr Caso, a retired shipyard welder and councillor for the industrial suhurb of Renteria since 1995. The Spanish Prime Minister, Jose Maria Aznar, attending a European Union summit in Luxembourg, insistnot back down in its fight against the separatist guerrillas. Mr Aznar was expected to attend the funeral today.

The conservative Basque off.

Homeland and Freedom, has nationalist leader Antonio Arkilled more than 800 people in danza, who has long urged dialogue with the separatists, said the attack "was a cynical kick in the teeth for all those seeking a negonated solution". Faint signs indicate that even the pro-Eta Herri Batasuna party may be divided over Eta's action. In a rare hreaking of ranks. Herri Batasuna's lawyer. Patri Zabaleta, condemned the killing as "unjustified".

Last week the Supreme Court jailed all 23 leaders of Herri Batasuna for eight years for collaborating with terrorists, prompting their spokesman to warn of "grave and direct con-

Yesterday's killing appears to have dashed hopes for an early ceasefire raised when Eta announced a semi-truce last

The government last week agreed to transfer 16 Eta prisoners held far from the Basque country to jails nearer home, which partly meets one of Eta's principal demand.

A proposed general strike called by Herri Batasuna for Monday was yesterday called



Silver streak: A unmanned prototype of the Japanese magnetically levitated train, or Maglev, which yesterday ran at 321mph, breaking the world speed record for trains - set by the Franch TGV - by 1mph

Cemetery war ends with widows' peace

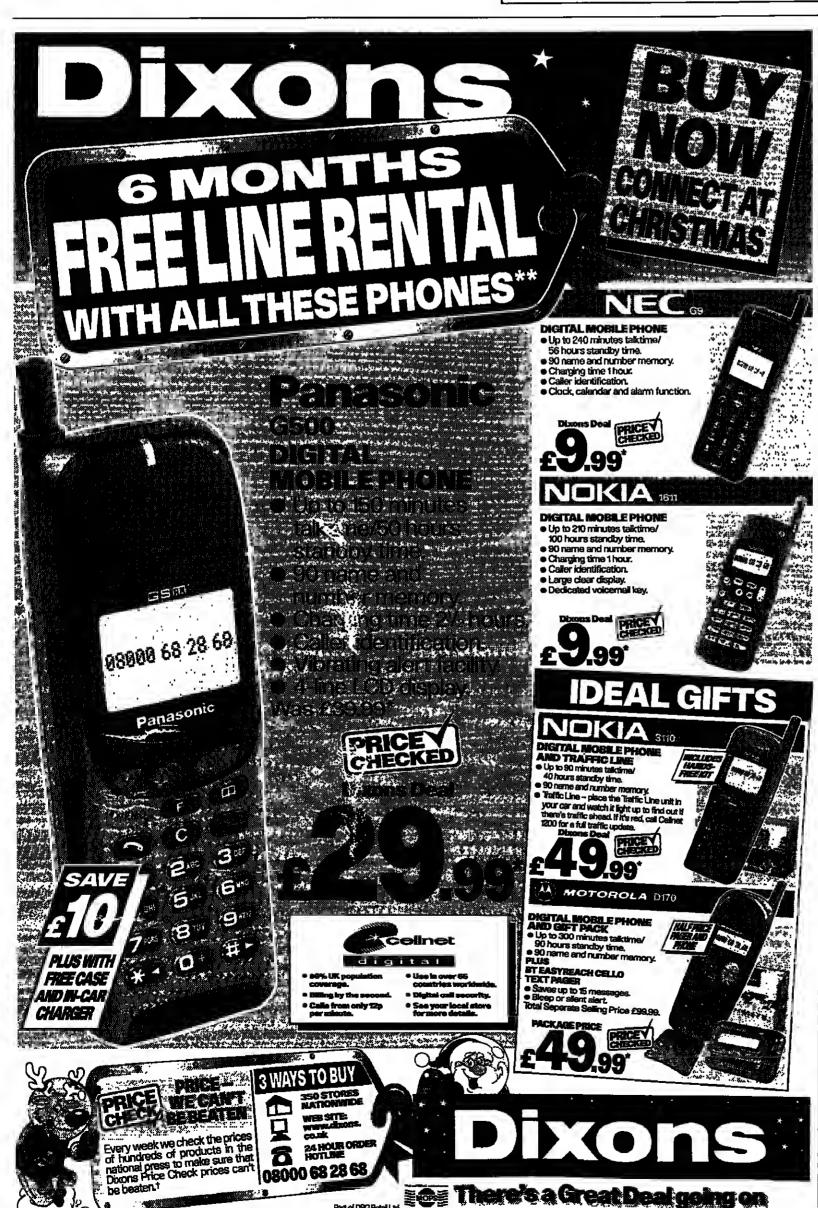
carlos the evolution orns cou

Two widows, one Jewish and one Muslim, who had been fighting in court over who would bury their shared husband, decided on a compromise

yesterday. Shuakat Kuza, a Muslim who converted to Judaism and back to Islam, will he buried in the Muslim section but near the Jewish side of a cemetery in Haifa where the Jewish widow lives. There will be two separate burial ceremonies, one Jewish and one Muslim, Israeli television reported.

Kuza had converted to Judaism in 1994, taken a Hebrew name and married his Jewish partner of 30 years. But three days after he married her in November 1995, he went to an Islamic court in Hehron and converted back to Islam and married a Muslim woman, without ever divorcing his Jewish wife. Muslims are allowed to marry up to four women.

After Kuza died recently of heart failure, each wife demanded to be allowed to bury him according to her religion and on Thursday took the case to the Supreme Court. The court had planned to rule on the case in the coming days but Israeli television said the women reached the compromise on



Rwanda massacre survivors tell of machete horror

Survivors of an attack on a camp in north-western Rwanda in which 271 people were killed said Hutu rebels came at night and started chopping up their

The ethnic Tutsi refugees from the neighbouring Demoeratic Republic of the Congo started chopping, chopping, were killed at Mudende camp. about 120 km (75 miles) northwest of Kigali, when it was attacked on Wednesday night by Hutu militiamen armed with rifles, grenades and machetes, according to a senior army official.

A total of 271 people were wounded. said Colonel Nyamwasa Kayumba.

Yesterday morning survivors were burying the dead - mostly women and children and

which they were slaughtered. One survivor, whose son

most hearing horrific wounds -

was hacked to death, said: of the killings. They came very quietly while we were sleeping and we had no chance to escape. They just chopping."
The UN refugee chief,

Sadako Ogata, strongly condemned the attack and a spokeswoman called the attackers merciless.

The US Secretary of State, was asking US war crimes envoy David Scheffer to go to Rwanda to assist in the inves-

tigation of the massacre. Mr Scheffer, who has been

accompanying Mrs Albright on just yards from the tents in a seven-nation African tour, had been asked to go back to Rwanda, to try to assist in the probe

Mrs Alhright, the most senior US official to visit Rwanda since a genocide in 1994, has condemned a recent upsurge of violence in the country connected with the return from Congo of hundreds of thousands of Hutu refugees who fled their country in 1994, fearing reprisals for the genocide. Some \$00,000 Tutsis and moderate Madelcine Albright, told a news Hutus died in Rwanda in 1994 killed in the attack and 227 were conference in Congo that she during a genocide by extremist Hutu militia and members of the former government and army. Rwanda's government fought its way to power during the genocide. Reuters, Mudende

Swiss order return of Marcos millions

The Swiss Supreme Court ruled yesterday that assets belonging to late Filipino dictator Ferdinand Marcos should be returned to the Philippines. The ruling related specifically to S100m (£62m) of approximately \$500m that have been frozen in Swiss bank accounts since Marcos was ousted in 1986. Imelda Marcos, who is in the United States for eye treatment, could not he immediately reached for comment.

Suu Kyi aide 'quits'

One of the two chief aides to Burma's democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi has resigned from her party, the military government said. Kyi Maung, vice chairman of the National League for Democracy, and one of Suu Kyi's most trusted lieutenants, resigned from the party because of conflicts with the 1991 Nobel Peace Prize winner, a press release from the government - AP, Rangoon

Wolf hunt ban

Poland's government announced plans to ban wolf hunning for three years. The main impact will he in the forested south-eastern province of Krosno, which last season controversially gave hunters permission to shoot about 70 wolves from a population of more than 200. - Reuters, Warsaw

Karadzic's party wins most seats

The party loyal to war-crimes suspect Radovan Karadzic won the most seats in Bosnian Serb elections but lost its all-out majority. The pro-Karadzic Serbian Democratic Party won 24 of 83 seats. The Serhian Radical Party, its most likely ally, tied in third place with Biljana Plavsic's Serbian National Alliance, at 15 seats each. Second was the Muslim-dominated Coalition for Bosnia-Herzegovina, with 16 seats, mainly from refugees' absentee votes. — AP, Banja Luka

Mauritania votes

Mauritania went to the polls yesterday to elect a new president but, with the main opposition boycotting the vote and President Maaouva Ould Sid Ahmed Taya almost sure to win, early turnout was low. Mr Taya, who took power in a bloodless coup in 1984, faces four rivals, including the first hlack African to run for the job. - Reuters, Nouokchott

Lesbian priest row

Norway's only female hishop yesterday dudged a decision on sacking a female priest who defied church rules by "marrying" her lesbian lover. Bishop Rosemarie Koehn of Norway's state Protestant church gave Siri Sunde, who was suspended earlier this year, an extension of leave that was due to expire yesterday. - Reuters, Oslo

Russia grounds air force after fatal crashes

The Russian air force has been grounded for a week in a move that marks the deepest humiltation yet to be inflicted on the. remnants of the once mighty Soviet military machine.

Moscow said the flying ban was imposed by the head of the force, General Pyotr Deinekin, following two fatal crashes involving military aircraft within

claimed at least 76 lives.

seen as a further measure of Russia's plight by the disgruntled military, and particularly by two News agency reports in former generals campaigning 10 oust Boris Yeltsin - Alexander Lebed and Lev Rokhlin.

According to Russia's Interfax news agency, the grounding does not apply to aircraft on

five days. Together, these combat duty. On Thursday, eight people were killed when The decision is certain to be a military An-12 bit a helicopter while landing at Naryan-Mar in Russia's far north. Five days earlier, at least 68 people died when an An-124 cargo plane fell out of the sky. General Deinekin said the groundcd aircraft would only be

available for "military duties". - Phil Reeves, Moscow

11/THE JACKAL

Carlos the revolutionary scorns court's right to judge

llich Ramirez Sanchez. better known as Carlos the Jackal, dismissed his trial, which began in Paris yesterday, as "illegal". John Lichfield reports that in his urbane but pompous first public appearance the middle-aged Venezuelan declared himself a 'professional

revolutionary in the old

Leninist tradition',

The former Global Public Enemy Number One seemed to enjoy bis first day in court after three years in French jails. He smiled so enthusiastically at the mostly female jury that be was told off by the presiding judge. He gave his profession as "professional revolutionary" and his address as "the world is my domain, last address,

As expected, Ramirez Sanchez, 48, the son of a lawyer, challenged the legality of the proceedings and partially conducted his own defence. "I cannot be judged because of the conditions of my arrest," he in prison, for the triple murder

re survivor

horror

aradzic's party

ins most seats

F 1

The man blamed for many ment of Paris in June 1975. of the most spectacular terrorist actions of the Seventies and Eighties, was seized by French connivance of the Sudanese authorities.

He is charged with the murder of two French secret service in Paris in 1975 but other trials are expected to follow.

jacket and multi-coloured cra-. los undertook many of his most vat, Carlos spoke calmly, although he often lapsed into the the kidnapping of Opec (Ordated revolutionary terminology of his era.

He objected to the pres- in December 1975 - in the ence of the lawyer representing name of the Palestinian cause. families of his alleged victims, claiming that he was a "militant leading lawyer, Isabelle Zionist revisionist.

the civil parties in the case, SOS- make damaging revelations if Attentats, calling it "extremist, racist and revisionist." He said the group was "exploiting the she said: "You'll see."

legitimate sadness of the fam-

ilies" of victims. Carlos repeatedly described himself as a "professional revolutionary in the old Leninist tradition" and said he was fighting "for bumanity, for the people of Palestine, for the people of France" and against what he called "American imperialism and the Zionist state".

Security for the trial, which is being beld at the Palais de Justice, close to Notre Dame Cathedral in the centre of Paris, was unusually tight.

The terror network run by Carlos with the help of Soviet bloc governments collapsed long ago but the police were taking no chances.

Through his many lawyers, Ramirez Sanchez has threatened to use the trial to make embarrassing revelations about his trade-offs with Western goveruments and security services in the Eighties.

As a result, the French authorities say that they have not ruled out the possibility of an attempt on Carlos's own

The trial is expected to last a week, Ramirez Sanchez bas already been convicted, in his absence, and sentenced to 30 years at a flat in the fifth arroudisse-

In a lengthy interview in an Arah newspaper in the Eighties, Carlos admitted the killings but agents in Sudan in 1994 with the under French law he is entitled to another trial in person.

At the start of yesterday's hearing, Carlos took charge of the jury selection himself. He agents and a Lebanese informer objected to one man and a woman with an Arab-sounding name. The second objection was Looking relaxed in a beige puzzling, given the fact that Carspectacular actions - including ganisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries) oil ministers

Before the hearing, Carlos's Coutant-Peyre, repeated the He also lambasted one of threat that her client would the trial went ahead.

Asked what these would be,



Paris alert: A police officer on duty yesterday in the court of justice district, where security is tight for the trial of Ramirez Sanchez, below, in a photograph taken in prisor Photograph: Michel Euler



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12/CHANGING IRAN



Film censor allows a chink of light behind the veil

Iranians are flocking to see The Snowman, a film whose hero dreams of living in the United States and who, to secure a visa, dresses as a woman in the hope of marrying an American. Our Middle East Correspondent finds

Iran's film industry is

breaking free of the

censors.

Almost every year since the 1979 revolution, Iran's film directors have won an international prize - but no thanks to the government. When Abhas Taste of the Cherry for the

£10 OF

BY ROBERT FISK

Ministry of Islamic Guidance delayed the film's export licence for so tong that the reels only arrived in France after the festival had begun.

Incredibly, the story of a potential suicide vainly seeking help from friends and strangers to kill himself won the Palme d'Or. It was a slap in the face for the Iranian ministry but earned a peck on the cheek for Kiaorstami from Catherine Deneuve. When the director returned home in triumph to Tehran, he was forced to flee the airport to Kiaorstami wished to enter his avoid outraged radicals who ctaimed he had breached Is-

THERE'S A SONY CENTRE NEAR YOU.

SOUTH EAST

Cannes festival this year, the lamic morals by accepting a "bise" from Ms Deneuve.

Since President Mohamed Khatami's election last May, however, there are discreet signs that the lot of Iran's film-makers is improving. The Snowman was originally banned by the authorities but now it draws packed houses in Tehran, where its daring contents - the film includes pre-revolutionary songs - have prompted Iranians to ask whether oew cultural freedoms may after all be oo the way. Women are shown with little head-covering and the hero's cross-dressing in an attempt to find an American "husband" in Turkey astonished cinema-goers.

After four years of refusals from the Islamic Guidance ministry, known by the single word "Ershad" (Guidance), Tahmineh Milani has just been given permission to make her film Two Women, a story of two female students at Tehran university during the revolution. One of the women is rich but untalented, the other poor hut very intelligeot; the wealthy studeot is successful, the poor woman fails. Social injustice, the film will say, continued after the revolution.

Milani, a 37-year-old architect, is one of Iran's six female directors (there are about 200 male film-makers) but had received no authorisation to make a film since 1993. "There is a very good feeling in the industry that things are going to change," she says. "Of course, all of us voted for Mr Khatami because we didn't want Mr Nateq-Nouri [Khatami's conservative challenger] to get elected. I just thought he was the best among the candidates. It doesn't mean he's my ideal persoo and we cannot expect a miracle from him. But since he arrived, he's got rid of people in the Ershad who were very conservative and who were holding everyone back."

Cinema lovers should treasure the restrictions imposed oo Iranian film directors last year by Ezzatollah Zarghami, a former army officer incoogruously appointed deputy minister in charge of the cinema.

He decreed that in Iranian films there should be: no closeup shots of women; oo foreign music; no clothes oo women which showed the shape of their bodies; no ties or bow-ties, un-

less the wearers were depicted as being morally evil; oo badlydressed policemen or soldiers and oo jokes about them; no physical contact between men and women; definitely oo kissing between mee and women. By way of greeting, men could kiss each other (platooically, of course); no Islamic holy cames could be given to bad characters; no film should be without a scene of men or womeo at prayer.

Zarghami was laughed out of office within months.

Milani has oo time for those who look back with nostalgia on the pre-revolutionary Iranian cinema when, she says, sex. violence and cheap musical stories were pre-requisites for any successful movie. "After the revolution, for a period, things got better," Milani says. "Mr Khatami ran the Ershad at that time. Later, things changed and the restrictions forced people to look for different things. When you take sex and violence oot of a movie, you have to replace it with something else; you have to find some new meaning to entertain the audience."

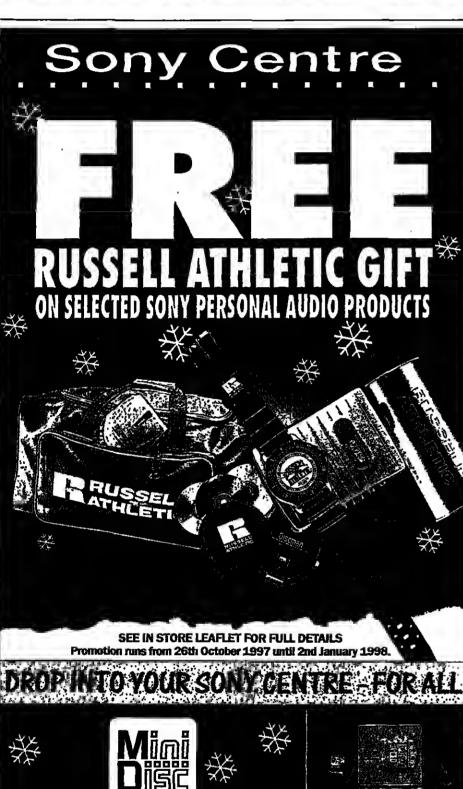
Amid the swamp of war movies on the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war, Milani wanted to make a picture which depicted "the power of war" and the way that it affected families. "When a man goes to war, it is his decisioo but wheo he gets killed, it affects all his family. They are paralysed when a person in the family dies," she says, Milani visited the old war froot at Qasr Shirin. The Ershad was not interested in such films.

If things are improving - and they appear to be - this is good news in a country where the cinema has ofteo beeo the template of political change. No one has forgotten that it was a cioema fire in Abadan, killing more than 400 people, which provoked many of the anti-Shah street demonstrations in 1979. Milani is designing a oew cinema for Tehran, aloog with her architect husband. President Khatami has appointed a film director, Seifollah Dad, whose Lone Survivor was filmed in Lebanon and depicted Palestinian womeo without Islamic head covering, as the new

deputy minister of cinema. Iranian films have won 30 awards io the last decade and bring in more audiences than imported Western movies. Bul then what else would you expect wheo almost all scenes involving women were cut from Dances with Wolves, Marathon Man and The Last Emperor?

SOME OF OUR

TOY GUNS TH







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Oxfam has seen a big increase in the use

of child soldiers. Guns are cheap (\$10 for an AK47 in Liberia) and easy to use (an M16 can be stripped down and reassembled by a child of ten). And young men raised on violence are quick to train the next generation of boys – and girls.

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Britain accused of harbouring Egypt's 'evil mastermind'

After the slaughter at Luxor last month, the Egyptian President, Hosni Mubarak, lashed out at Britain for "harbouring terrorists under the slogan of human rights" and Egypt published a list on the internet of "wanted masterminds of terrorism". Steve Crawshaw hears what a "terrorist mastermind" has to say, and finds some strange ambiguities.

High on the Egyptians' hate-list is Yasser el-Serri, whose application for asylum in the UK is now heing considered. Mr el-Serri was convicted in his absence in Egypt in connectinn with the attempted assassination in 1993 of the prime minister, Atef Sedki, in which a young girl died. He is one of the main reasons why Egypt claims that Britainadopts a soft policy on terrorism.

Mr el-Serri was no longer in Egypt at the time of the assassination attempt. He insists, too, that he was not involved in the attack from afar, "Mubarak feels no shame to do whatever suits him. It's a fabricated propaganda, aimed at Great Britain. It's obvious that because Mubarak has failed in his internal policies, he wants to attract the attention of abroad."

He condemns the slaughter at Luxor, where 58 tourists died, while seeking to spread the blame. "I condemn the massacre in Egypt - and also the Egyptian regime which is responsible for terrorist activities." He is happy to describe himself as an Islamic fundamentalist - reason enough for him to be anathema to the Egyptian government. He insists on his belief in Islamic sharia law - and argues that this belief be returned to Egypt in connection with his includes an abhorrence of violence. "As conviction in absentia. "Many times, the Muslims, we are not allowed to kill inno- Egyptian government asked me to be trans-

In Britain, Mr el-Serri occupies a polit- British Government refused. They kept sayical no-man's land. He is under constant sur-ing: 'Give us evidence'." The Home Office veillance by Special Branch and MI5 - as refuses to comment on the details of Mr elpotential suspect, and as potential victim. His Serri's case, beyond confirming that an ap-Special Branch minders advised him to plication for asylum has been received. change his address for his own safety (in Mr el-Serri insists that he accepts the am-- but because we don't let these things hap- it is right that both sides can be punished pen here"). He insists that his Islamic Ob- for a violent foul. "The British Government flat, is only a "humanitarian and media plat- to the Egyptian secret police - or to the funform", and does not raise funds for potential damentalists. I respect that." illegal under proposed new UK laws.



Yasser el-Serri denies he is a terrorist, saying that his Islamic beliefs are incompatible with such activities

Photograph: Tom Pilston

ferred [back to Egypt]. And many times the

el-Serri's words: "not because we like you biguous terms of his stay in the UK. He says servatory Centre, which he runs from his is like the referee. They will give the red card

are interested in gathering more informa- masterminds", not all is as it seems.

Egypt has repeatedly demanded that he tion. At a recent anti-government demonstration at its embassy in Mayfair, hesuited men with video cameras peered from behind the curtains, filming the crowd.

None the less, Egyptian policy towards opponents of the regime remains mysterious. The Egyptian emhassy in London has been in touch with Mr el-Serri about the possibility of "opening a dialogue". The Independent has spoken to a go-between involved in the tentative approaches, which apparently included representatives of the Egyptian security services. Mr el-Serri confirmed that the approaches had taken place, but claimed that Special Branch had told him to be wary. Egyptian officials deny that there have been any approaches. But terrorist activities - awhich would become Certainly, the Egyptian security services it is clear that, when it comes to "terrorist

a safe haven since conrad's day

Britain's liberal treatment of asylum seekers caused frequent clashes with the rest of Europe in the nineteenth century: it was seen as a safe haven for terrorists and anarchists. Reactionary regimes in Vienna and Moscow, in particular, believed that Britain's openess to refugees was just the cover for

hustile scheming against them. This formed the background to Joseph Conrad's 1907 novel, The Secret Agent. Verloc, a double agent, is encouraged by Vladimir, an official at an unnamed European embassy (probably the Russians) to mount a terrorist outrage aimed at shocking the British

into a clampdown. Vladimir lectures Verloc: "England lags. This country is absurd with its sentimental regard for individual liberty. ... The imbecile bnurgeoisie of this cnuntry make themselves the accomplices of the very people whose aim is to drive them out of their houses to starve in ditches. And they have the political power still, if they only had the sense to use it for their own preservation. ... What they want

just now is a jolly good scare." Verloc is told to mount a bomb attack on the Greenwich Observatory, on the basis that "The whole civilised world has heard of Greenwich,"

Where freedom and law collide

For any democracy, dealing with alleged terrorists seeking asylum from abroad involves a difficult balancing act. The Government has to reconcile the likely impact on its hilateral relations with the other country involved - in this case Egypt - and its commitments to comhat terrorism, against obligations under international treaties.

The result can often be to upset both human rights campaigners and the terrorists' home-government.

In the United Kingdom, all applications for asylum are individually considered, under the terms of the 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, and a later 1967 Protocol. Even if someone is categorised as a terrorist applying for asylum, they cannot simply be shipped back to their home country. Under Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights, soon to be incorporated into British law, a terrorist cannot be returned to a country where he or she fears "cruel or degrading" treatment. People considered to be plotting in this country to cause terrorist acts elsewhere can be prosecuted, but such cas-

A recent report into anti-terrorism laws by Lord Lloyd of Berwick described the lack of a general offence to conspire to commit such acts abroad as a "major gap" in British law.

It is an area which Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, is to consider in the review of anti-terrorist legislation. However, Mr Straw has himself raised the issue of the "Mandela" question. Would a democracy wish to treat those fighting against oppression, as the ANC were against the apartheid regime, in the same way as other supposed "terrorists"?

At the same time Mr Straw has made it clear he wants to toughen up on extremist groups using Britain as a fund-raising base. And as the focus on Irish terrorism fades, however temporarily, more attention is being given to the question of extreme Islamic groups using Britain as a centre for their operations.

- Michael Streeter Legal Affairs Correspondent

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المكتاب الاجل

Tabulan 1 Comment in the 19

where freedom hospital cost a vear £150m a year

More than a miliion accidents a year could be happening in English hospitals, a Commons committee warned last night. Anthony Bevins, Political Editor, examines a scathing audit of safety on the wards.

"Hospitals are dangerous places," David Davis, Conservative chairman of the Commons Public Accounts Committee, said last night.

"There are dangers for staff, for patients and for visitors. The simple fact is that the levels of accidents are too high. Health and safety legislation is there to protect people, but it is being hlatantly ignored."

Evidence given to the MPs showed that patients in the Royal Liverpool Hospital were nine times more likely to have an accident than patients in the South Manchester University Teaching Hospital.

When bospitals were asked to report on the action they had taken to cure the problem, the Carlisle Hospitals NHS Trust said, among other things, that it had "amended cleaning procedures to prevent high level of slips in corridors". Trafford Healthcare Trust said it was pursuing access to advice on health and safety from a competent person".

The accident-prone Royal Liverpool University Hospitals course." said, among other action taken, • Health and Safety in NHS that a "risk and claims manager post [had been] established".

The MPs' report said: "We consider it essential that hos-

zine.

places to be treated in, to work in, and to visit."

But they warned: "On the basis of an accident recording exercise in 30 trusts, the National Audit Office estimated that there were likely to have been some 450,000 accidents during 1995 in NHS acute hospital trusts in England.

"Allowing for under-recording, there may have been in excess of one million accidents. The costs of accidents were likely to have been at least £154 million a year." That money would have been better spent on patient treatment, the MPs said.

But the criticism did not end there. "Although the NHS Executive issued guidance on incident recording systems in 1993," the report said, "17 of the 30 trusts visited by the National Audit Office did not have systems which met the requirements of a good system.

"The Health and Safety Executive estimated that the health sector reports, on average, only 37 per cent of the accidents they are legally required to report," That low level of reporting was condemned by the MPs as "highly unsatisfactory".

It was also reported by the MPs that 15 per cent of all staff accidents recorded in surveyed hospitals involved lifting patients and equipment.

Perhaps in response to that, the West Lancashire Healthcare Trust told the MPs: "Training in manual handling has now been incorporated into the induction

Acute Hospital Trusts in England. Public Accounts Committee, second report. Commons paper 350, session 1997-98. Stationery



Bond with me, baby: Scientific interest has focused on chemical triggers that cement human relationships

Photograph: Michael Goldman

Love is ... a sniff of the right type of body odour

A biochemist believes he has cracked the chemistry of love. Jeremy Laurance, Health Editor, asks if smell can trigger human longing.

United States scientists believe they have uncovered a key mechanism in the attachment that mothers feel for their babies. Research on rats and mice shows that the act of giving birth releases chemicals in

al pathway - an electrical circuit in the hrain - which establishes the loving bond.

The research, reported in New Scientist, suggests that for those mothers who reject their unique sexual signature - can habies at hirth, the absence of the loving bond could be remedied with a carefully timed dose of drugs. But the finding has also reawakened interest in the chemical triggers that draw males and females to-

Dr George Dodd, a hio-

the hrain that lay down a neur- chemist and perfumer and for- nose. If you want to appear as life." Dr Dodd believes that mer director of the Institute of Olfactory Research at the University of Warwick, says that pheromones - odiferous chemicals that represent a person's

> Dr Dodd, who runs a healing centre in the west of Scotland, claims to have bottles of human pheromones which he describes as the world's first scientifically tested love potion.

be used to select compatible

one of the warmer people at a party you can use these pheromones. It will enhance your chances," he told the Today programme on BBC Radio 4.

It is through the baby's bond with its mother that the power of pheromones is established, according to Dr Dodd. "When we are attracted to someone we unconsciously register their pheromones. They trigger ancient memories of being cud-"We judge people through the dled in the first few minutes of meant by sexual chemistry."

dating agencies would score higher success rates if they made use of pheromones. By asking applicants to rank their preferences for 12 different families of synthetic human pheromones, which can be sent by post on tear off strips, it would be possible to match

compatible dates. The sexually compatible enjoy each other's body odour. There's an odour conversation between them. That is what is

Doctors' run on GP funds feared

National Health Service managers warned yesterday that there could be a run on health authority funds, damaging patient care, following the Government's announcement this week of an end to GP fundholding.

Health authorities hold an estimated £200m of accrued savings on behalf of GP fundholders, and fear that family doctors may seek to withdraw it suddenly now they know that fundholding is to end by April

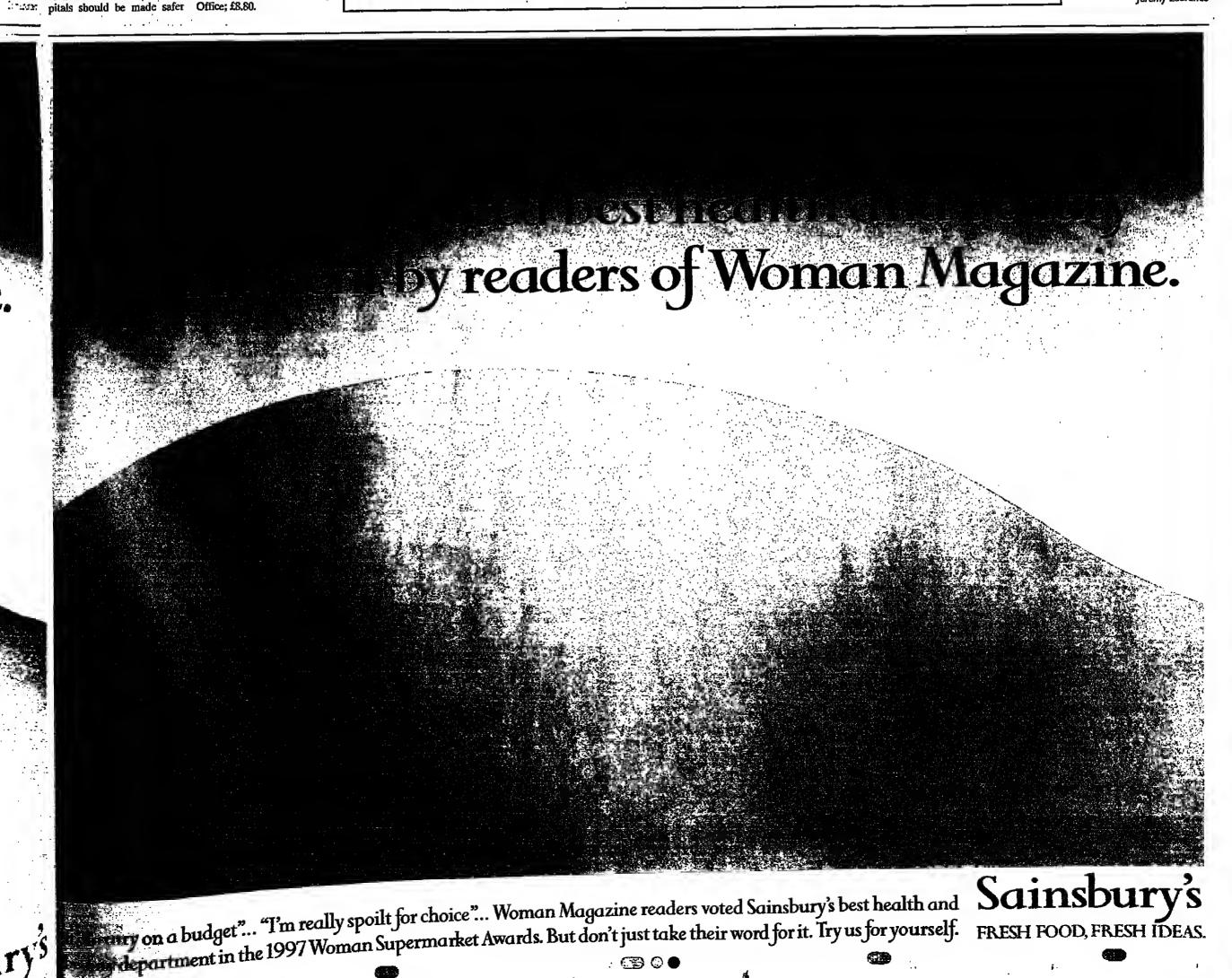
Jaki Meekings, chairman of the Healthcare Financial Management Association, said: This money belongs to the GPs and is held by health authorities who have used it for their own purposes but who are acting effectively as a savings bank. They have planned to pay it back but our worry is the doctors may all want it at once. It is like all the members of a building society going in and withdrawing their savings on the same day."

There are 3,500 GP fundholders, covering more than half the population, who are allocated budgets for drugs, nursing staff and routine hospital care for their patients. They are allowed to keep any savings they make to invest in extending their surgeries or improving patient care in other ways. Up to four years' savings can be accrued be-

fore they must be spent. Under the Government's plans for the NHS, set out in a White Paper published last Tuesday, GP fundholding is to be replaced from April 1999 by Primary Care Groups, local collectives of about 50 GPs who will have control of almost the en-

tire NHS hudget for their areas. Ms Meekings said it was the association's job to warn of any move which could financially destabilise the NHS.

- Jeremy Laurance



Rebels fail to blunt Blair's resolve

Undaunted and undeterred by this week's Commons revolt on lone parents' benefit, Tony Blair is

determined to press on with welfare reform. Anthony Bevins, Political Editor, finds some of his ministerial colleagues shaken by the prospect.

The hard edge of Labour's welfare reforms is to continue with a cuthack in industrial injuries benefit, according to ministerial sources yesterday.

The Prime Minister is as gung-ho for change as he appeared yesterday when he told Sun readers: "The easy way out on welfare is to keep the status quo. To keep the cycle of dependency which traps so many. I will not do that. I want to build a modern Britain and a decent society. To do that, we need compassion, with a hard edge,...

"The hard edge means demanding responsibility, knowing when to say no to demands for more money, and knowing that without a stable economy with debt in control, compassion on its own will be useless."

Many of Mr Blair's Labour colleagues are behind him in seeking ways of breaking benefits dependency, and they are prepared to make the "hard choices" to back that up.

But ministers and loyalist MPs alike have this week started to doubt the Prime Minis- they could "sell" that cut on the ter's judgement - because the decision on lone parents benefit, if anything, could make the target group even more dependent on their benefit. Those who find work would go back to the new, lower bene- identically injured and disabled

wisdom of punishing single parents with children under school age.

But The Independent has been told that in spite of the trauma of Wednesday's Commons vote - when the anguish, grief and rage was palpable as MPs went loyally into the division lobby - Mr Blair remains unchastened.

the Prime Minister is relying on the advice and wisdom of Peter Mandelson, jokingly referred to as the Minister with all Portfolios, and some other members of his inner circle, he is getting out of touch. One minister said that if reform was blindly pursued, there was a danger that the revolt would become incremental, with more and more MPs defying the leadership. The risk, then, would be of Mr Blair going deeper and deeper into his Number 10 hunker, and becoming even more reliant on unsound advice.

As for the threat of party discipline, it was a commonplace at Westminster on Thursday that Nick Brown, the Government Chief Whip, had no intention of cracking down on Wednesday night's rebels simply because, having been brought up by a lone mother, his heart was not in it.

The Independent understands that the most likely target for the next cut is industrial injuries disablement benefit. for which 265,000 claimants currently get £718m a year.

Some ministers believe that grounds that people injured and disabled at work get much more, at a maximum of around £101.10 per week, according to the Social Security Department yesterday, than people They also strongly doubt the ceive £84.10 a week, at most.



Lit rate if they lost that job. in accidents at home, who re- Full plate: Tony Blair taking notes at the two-day European Union summit in Luxembourg yesterday as, at home, the dissension within his party's ranks over benefit cuts shows no sign of abating Photograph: Jerry Lampen/Reuters

Oxfam condemns arms sales breach

Government of being in breach of its own guidelines on arms sales. Eleven arms export li-during its six-month presidencences have been granted to Indonesia since 28 July, when Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, announced new regulanons for arms sales overseas.

This flies in the face of the criteria," an Oxfam spokesman said yesterday. "In practice, what is happening is not the same as Mr Cook is saying."

Oxfam's analysis suggested that since Labour took office in. May, there have been 22 arms export licences issued for Indonesia - half of them since Mr Cook issued his new regulations.

According to Margaret Beckett, President of the Board of Trade, just four applications have been rejected since the new regulations were introduced. But the Oxfam spokesman said that government figures presented only half the picture, because they related to military equipment. Police equipment. which could also be used for repression, was not included.

Opening a campaign with advertisements in some newspapers today - showing a child with a gun, and the message "Dear Santa. Please don't send me a gun this Christmas" - Ox-

Oxfam yesterday accused the fam said that current regulations

were still too weak. It urged the Government

cy of the European Union. from January, to agree a gen-uinely tough EU wide code of conduct on arms exports to prevent arms going to repressive regimes".

The spokesman said the

Charity Commission had ruled that charities were allowed to become involved in political campaigning, such as the landmines campaign, where the issues involved were "pertinent" to their work.

"If we are to stop small arms falling into small hands, then a vital part of the solution is for both British and EU arms sales to he regulated by a far tougher code of conduct than the Government appears committed to," Diana Melrose, head of policy at Oxfam,

Oxfam has discovered, ac cording to the latest analysis of export licences, that a "worrying" number have been agreed for countries where there is strong risk of weapoury being used against civilians - including Turkey, Indonesia, Algeri Colombia and Nigeria.

Commons souvenir that comes with a government health warning

The Government has faced ing committee in a written heavy flak for seeming to have softened its stance on the issue of tobacco sponsorship. But it should be grateful that critics failed to notice the smoke signals closer to home.

For as ministers thrash out whether tobacco sponsorship encourages people to smoke, the Government has come under fire for failing to ban sales of its own House of Commons hranded cigarettes. The offending items came to light when Bob Russell, Liberal Democrat MP for Colehester, for the Department's outlets to asked the chairman of the cater- sell cigarettes." - Jojo Moyes

question whether he would "take steps to discourage sales" of the cigarettes.

Dennis Turner, Labour MP for Wolverhampton SE, replied: 'It would be very unusual if a chairman of the Catering Committee sought to discourage the sale and consumption of items sold as gifts and souvenirs from the Refreshment Department outlets ... The view of the Committee was that for as long as the smoking of tobacco products was legal, then it was acceptable



Treasury mandarin backs Robinson as Lilley steps up financial attack

has insisted that the Paymaster General Geoffrey Robinson, acted correctly in the handling of his financial affairs.

The comments by Sir Terry Burns. Permanent Secretary. come in a letter to the shadow Chancellor, Peter Lilley, in a response to queries about Mr Robinson's position.

Controversy flared when it the discretionary heneficiary of an offshore trust established by a Belgian friend who has since died.

to Mr Robinson's personal Robinson's relationship to the

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The Treasury's top civil servant holdings - worth at least £18m. It says: "My discussions with the Paymaster General about his financial interests focused on his beneficial holdings and my advice to him was that it would be appropriate to transfer them to ablind trust, which is what happened. During the course of the discussion the Paymaster General told me of the existence of a family trust. Since this vehicle emerged that Mr Robinson was already existed, and offered similar protection to that provided by a blind trust, there was no reason to consider it further."

Sir Terry's reference to "pro-Sir Terry's letter refers first tection" is an allusion to Mr

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Sir Terry Burns: Discussions with Paymaster General

Orion Trust set up by his Belgian friend. He insists that he has no say over the handling of the trust - as is the case now with the hlind trust containing his personal holdings.

Mr Robinson commented tater: "Sir Terry Burns completely vindicated me. I acted in accordance with the ministerial code and on the advice of the Treasury Permanent Secretary."

Mr Lilley claimed, however, that Sir Terry's letter indicated he had not known all the details of the affair. "Over the past few

days, it has become clear that the Paymaster General has been economical with the truth in public statements about his personal financial arrangements," he said. "It has now emerged that he even kept the Permanent Secretary to the Treasury in the dark about the nature of his offshore family trust in Guernsey."

The shadow Chancellor said he had asked Sir Terry in a letter last week how much Mr Robinson had told him.

"Did Sir Terry know that the Orion Trust had been involved in complicated share transactions with Mr Robinson's company, Stenbell Limited? "Did Sir Terry know that the

Orion Trust now owns a significant stake in Mr Robinson's former company, TransTec?

"Sir Terry's reply confirms that he was not made aware of these important - and highly relevant - matters."

Mr Lilley has written again to Sir Terry, asking if he would now revise his advice to the minister "in the light of the facts that have now come to light".



حكان الاعل

1 condemn ales breach



It's a mad, mad world, my masters: John Quayle as Adam Overdo, a censorious JP on the prowl for iniquity in the guise of a lunatic

Photograph: Bill Cooper/EPO

Welcome, people, one and all, to Bartholomew Fair

The RSC's new, carnival-style staging of Ben Jonson's rarely seen comedy finally frees the text from the fettering footnotes of its classic status. Even Puritans, says Paul Taylor, will enjoy the fun of this 'Fair'.

- . . Bartholomew Fair is the most brilliantly cotertaining breach of the peace the RSC has served up in a long time. Ben Jonson's mighty Jacobean comedy - in which self-deceived, two-faced Puritans go on a research trip into the great, avid, recking maw of the Fair and get hadly mangled - has a reputation for being the kind of show that, pullulatingly pop-

but leaves the general theatre-going public unable to find their feet amidst the footnotes.

disappoint. Richard Eyre's Victorian vision of the piece at the National in the late 1980s painstakingly and intelligently fingered Jonson as the pungent precursor of Dickens. But, perhaps because of its starring Philip Voss as Shylock, is for the altogether. Louche, sleazy, at once aroustrioling of historical perspectives, that middle-aged at heart. There are some nice staging had too tethered a feel. Boswell's, set in a Notting Hill Carnival-like atmosphere, goes into orbit. Move over Martin Amis, it's Jonson who is our contemporary.

The admirable rule (pioneered at the Royal Court) that you should do modern plays as if they were classics, and classic plays as if they were bot off the press, is put into ulous and full of specificities and argot now practice here with elating chutzpah, malign

past their sell-by date, triggers winnies of energy and (by and large) inspired loyalty learned laughter in the senior common room to the original. Boswell's Bartholomew Fuir would give a buzz and many a thought-provoking belly-laugh to the young audiences Productions, few on the ground, tend to now packing out the same director's production of Ben Elton's Popcorn: it is, therefore, in sharp contrast to this week's other Stratford opening of a classic.

Gregory Doran's Merchant of Venice. Voss's hammily tragic, knife-wielding Shylock is hard put to scrunch up enough withback to his knees on the slippery carpet of

walls and spitting Christian racists - and with a Portia (from Helen Schlesinger) who doesn't convince you that Belmont would be much of a picnic either - this is a staging that, for long stretches, comes across as just the latest thing to fall off the RSC's main-stage Shakespeare machine.

Bartholomew Fair is in a different league nidating, this l touches: an Antonio so ascetically thin that to that part in everyone that would like to be defiled. Boswell evokes this setting, a kind of red-light district of the soul, with great ered flesb to cut; Shylock's humiliation wit and economy. For example, a curtain signalled by the fact that, attempting to rise made up of long strings of light bulbs that to his feet to leave the court, he keeps falling sashays back and forth over the stage can gold coins contemptuously flung down for in handy when the production wants to show him earlier. But, set in a Venice of deter- us, filmically, the dizzy, strobing way the

minedly brooding mists, oppressive black world looks from inside the skull of an innocent who is going out of his skull on the party atmosphere created, as a diversion, by pickpockets. Hilarity shades into the sinister and back into hilarity. Imagine the young Alec Guinness trying to do a funky Marvin Gaye impression and you'll get some idea of the blissfully funny incongruity of the se-Goodman-Hill's terminally guileless young heir (literature's first record tries to dance up a storm like the cool Ja-

maican dude be so egregiously isn't. vas of eccentrics and hypocrites to life with rollicking recognisability, from Rob Edwards' splendid Quarlous, a superior-acting dropalso swing on its axis - a knack that comes out on the make who is like a frowstily bungover refugee from Withnail and I, to David Henry's spherically well-fed Zeal-of-the-land

Busy, the kind of born-again "visionary" who these days would be raking it in on a Christian cable channel. This charlatan decides it is quite all right for a Puritan to eat Bartholomew-pig provided one consumes it with a "reformed mouth", a sophistry tantamount to saying that sodomy is fine for Christian fundamentalists provided it is engaged in quence where, to a live reggae number, Tom with a "reformed anus". John Quayle's Adam Overdo, the censorious Justice of the of a madman, is first seen emerging from hiding in a skip. Best place for this idiot in Dream easting brings Jonson's vast can- a play full of potential but disqualified moral arbiters. Roll up, roll up, for the delectably dubious fun of this Fair.

> Bartholomew Fair' at the Swan, 'Merchant of Venice' at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon (booking: 01789 295623)

Hark at Lady Muck - giving Cleopatra the northern touch

THE WEEK ON RADIO ROBERT HANKS

Robinson

attack

Northermess is a many-splendoured thing, and exactly what it means depends on how far south you're starting. The composer Piers Hellawell, who is presenting a new World Service series on northern music called Northern Lights, starts reckoning from the Outer Hebrides, where Finnish composer Einojuhani

judging by his accent, he's a poncy southerner). So, for him, the chief feature of the northern condition is a purer relationship with nature: solitude, stark skies, unbounded elements, silence these strip away the barriers we place between ourselves and the encircling world.

The tone for the first programme, broadcast on Saturday, was set by the framing music: the

piece which, for once, deserves the epithet "haunting". The most striking feature of the work is the way it uses taped birdsong in place of a choir - mournful whoops, like a curlew, provided the foundation for hleak, open chords on strings. Rautavaara confirmed the notion, implicit in the music, that northernness is a philosophical condition: listening to the music of his Finnish colleagues, he imagines a Finnish

he lives and works (though, Rautavaara's Cannus Arcticus. a farmer sitting outside his sauna by a lake, thinking deep thoughts. and saying two or three words he

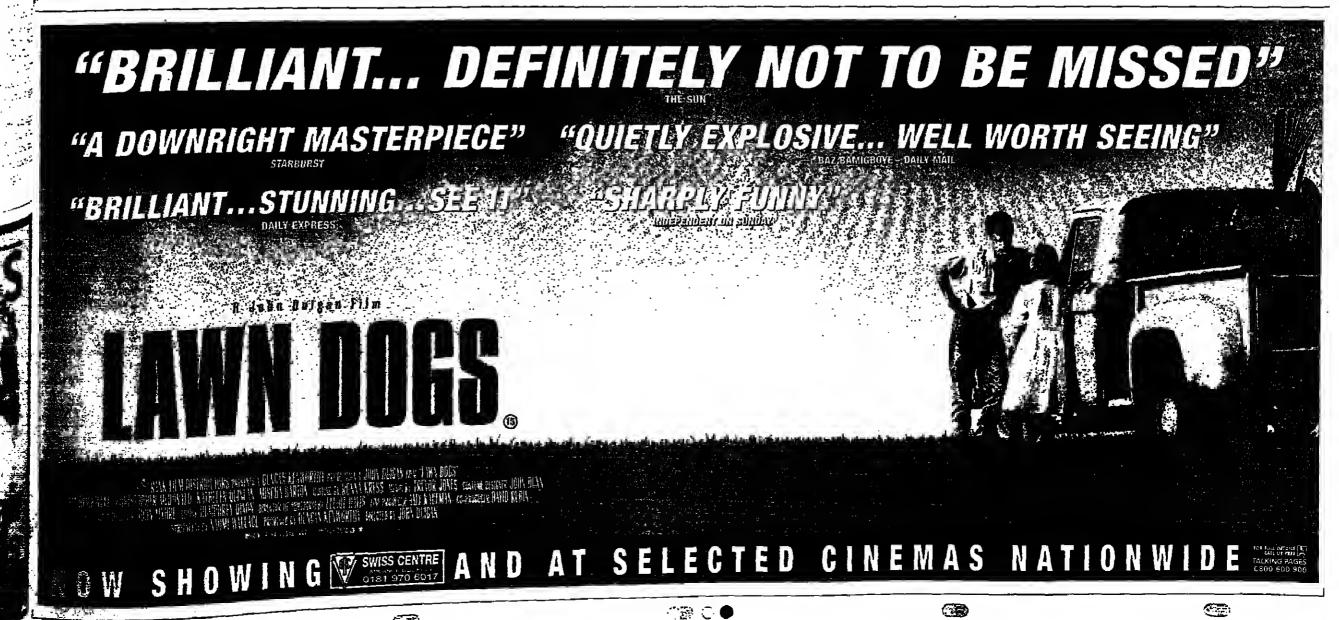
would never normally utter. This was touching. But it was hard not to feel that other. less poetically attractive aspects of northernness were heing glossed over. (For instance, 1 couldn't help noticing that Rautavaara's first name, pronounced something like "I know you honey", sounds just like a line from an Abba record.)

And the issue was confused when Peter Maxwell Davies. speaking from his Orcadian fastness, started to talk about the qualities of northern England -"In the North they'll tell you if they think you're a fool." There are qualities which the north of England and the Nordic world would both lay claim to (including hardihood, blummess of speech and the ability to hold large quantities of liquor); but they are very different things.

The difference was illustrated by Northern Broadsides' production of Antony and Cleopatra (Radio 3, Sunday). This was performed in what Barrie Rutter terms "the Northern voice". For a while, I toyed with the idea that the Romans were stiff-necked Yorkshiremen, the Egyptians wily Lancastrians, but in fact both sides were a mixed bunch. In a northern voice, the exotic intimacy of Cleopatra's court became a bit of a natter at the

hairdresser's, while dialogue between rulers and servants seemed to acquire a bizarrely aggressive edge. Cleopatra's handmaiden Charmian, as played by Julie Livesey, had echoes of Caroline Aherne's check-out girl in The Fast Show ("Ooh, ribbed condoms - very considerate"): Antony and Cleoputra, but it "Give me to drink mandragora," Cleopatra tells Charmian. "Why, madam?" she demands, with obvious disapproval ("Hark at Lady Muck").

Bear in mind I write as a genetically pure Yorkshireman. The intonations of the urban north of England are adapted to convey deflation, irony, challenge. And this northernness didn't diminish the production. It wasn't the most moving constantly opened new ways of reading relationships, fresh ways of hearing lines. How many productions of Shakespeare do that?



The modern Huckleberry Finns: young runaways are fleeing school, parents and boredom. Not all come back

We should not be too surprised when kids do a bunk, and head for the bright lights. After all, children's literature is full of such adventure, tales of those setting off heroically with their spotted handkerchiefs on the cod of a stick. Think of Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn hiding out oo Jackson's Island to escape Injun Joe and the oagging of Aunt Polly. Oliver Twist ran away to escape tife as an uodertaker's apprenticeship and nights spent sleeping in

More recently. Terence Blacker's Ninetics covel, Homebird, tells the tale of a 13-year-old who, underachieving at boarding school, escapes only to find his parents' marriage in trouble. So he runs and runs. Tony Blair himself has revealed that he ran away from boarding school at 13, ending up at Newcastle airport, where only the lack of international flights dashed his hopes of stowing away to

BY JACK O'SULLIVAN

So teenagers are not sbort of adveoturous example. Yet even these stories offer cautionary hints of the potential horrors facing runaways. Huck Finn and Tom return bome to find their funeral in progress. Oliver ends up friends with the Artful Dodger and in the clutches o

The teenagers in Melvin Burgess's controversial, award-winolog novel, Junk, exist in a dark world of heroin addiction. Terence Blacker's runaway finds bleak refuge in a squat. He says that he made his main character middle class precisely to show that even better off children can wash up on the street.

If anybody doubted him, Blacker's proposition got plenty of high-profile support from reality this week. The papers were thick with stories of middle-class children disappearing.

In retrospect, the most high-profile of these oow looks almost hanal as the 12year-old in question was found the next day, unharmed. But in another case, a 17year-old boy slept rough for weeks oo the streets of Loodon.

Consider the case of Anne Atkins, the Daily Telegraph's very Christian agony aunt, who discovered on Sunday morning that her 12-year-old daughter, Bink (Adelaide), had gone missing in London, having left a note on the kitchen table: "I'll be back soon, so don't worry about me."

Nearly 36 hours later, following a huge police search using helicopters, Bink was found. She had spent a rainy night in the local cemetery and eaten nothing more than a McDonald's large number-three meal and a cake, bought with a fiver given by a concerned passer by. Upon her return, Bink explained: "I didn't not want to be at home - I just wanted to go away for a few days. I had an overwhelming feeling of sadness, not about anything in particular, just general. It made me feel that I wanted to hide from people so they wouldn't find me."

The story of 17-year-old Alex Davies is more taxing. Last week, his face stared out of the missing person's column of the Big Issue, the magazine sold by homeless people. Alex had not been seen for nearly a month and his parents, Gordon Davies. a maoagemeot consultant, and his wife Catherice, an insurance manager, were

They had travelled from their Somerset home several times to scour the streets of London unsuccessfully. Last Sunday they were searching again, in Leices-



Reunions: Above, Alex Davies, 17, was found by his parents, Catherine and Gordon; below, Bink, 12, returned to Shaun and Anne Photographs: SWNS/Tim Anderson



ter Square. "I saw someone in front of us," recalled Mrs Davies. "He did oot look like Alex hut he was wearing a Tottenham scarf and I decided to run after him just

"He was walking very quickly and it became like one of those dreams where I was running and running and did not seem to

be getting anywhere. When I eventually caught up with him. I looked into this bearded face that was not Alex's, but then I recognised his eyes, he just said 'Mum' and we collapsed into each other's arms

Each of the stories reveals a truth about ruoaways - that they are usually fleeing

from something rather seeking some splendid dream.

Latterday Huckleberry Finns are exceptional. "The majority of younger peopte who run away are girls," said Sophie Woodfurde of the National Missing Person's Helpline. "They want to be with some older bloke, whom their parents want them

to stop seeing. We get a lot of people like Alex Davies running away because they are worried about school. This is a particular problem with GCSEs because of the constant pressure of course work being assessed whereas with O-levels the pressure came at the end of the year with the exam. "A lot of youngsters are trying to find their identity, trying to feel independent but have pareots who are still treating them as a child. Bullying at school is another reason. Young people may leave because of stress at home, the break-up of a marriage or abuse. The trouble is that a lot of adolescents are not very good at airing their concerns so they take off rather than talking about their prob-That said, Ms Woodforde acknowl-

edges that there are a few adventurers left,in the children's adventure story sense. "A few children still run away with the circus," she said, recalling one case where the only photograph they had of one teenager was of him dressed up as a clown.

Some stories retain, even in their unfolding, the promised romance of running

Thus, this weekend, the 17-year-old lovers, Olga Cardew and Alistair Tanner, from Bryanston School in Dorset, are being brought back home after escaping to Paris for a teenage tryst. They are more in the style of Peter Kerry, the schoolboy who ran away to Malaysia using his father's passport and credit card after a row with

his family. That is one kind of runaway story. Robert Swindells wrote a very different one in Stone Cold, his 1993 novel for teenagers. It describes a group of runaways to Londoo, who are preyed on by an former sergeant major nicknamed Shelter. His mission is to clean up the streets and he dresses himself up as a do-gooder in cordurovs and sandals. Offering a bed for the night, he brings his victims back to his flat, kills them, cuts their hair, dresses them in polished shoes and buries them in a line under the floorboards, tallest to the right. shortest to the left. He calls them his Camden horizontals.

Melvin Burgess, who did considerable research on the streets before publishing Junk, says that the image of the bogeyman waiting to entice a runaway into drugs and prostitution is exaggerated. "It is," he says, the really vulnerable kids from shit backgrounds who already have loads of problems who get picked up.

Sophie Woodforde agree. "There are real dangers but there is a community on the streets which is also on the lookout for young runaways, to protect them and make sure they are not preyed upon," she

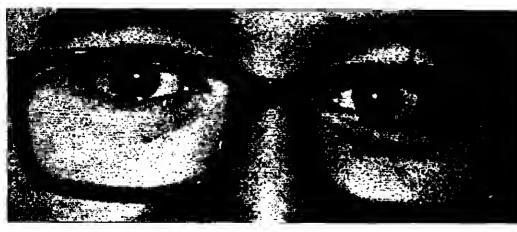
The official figures reveal that the vast majority of the 100,000 people under 18 reported missing every year return home within days. Nevertheless, in London alone, more than 100 teenage runaways go untraced each year.

Their families must cling on to the straws offered by another edition of the Big Issue, when the missing person's column showed a 15-year-old girl, her face still childish, with shiny blonde hair, trusting eyes and a smile for the camera. Yet the accompanying article described her as 32 years of age and 5ft 7in tall. She had been missing since 1978, wheo she ran away from her bome in Deptford, south London. The published picture was the last one taken before she left.

At that point most people must have given her up for dead. Yet soon after that article, she was found. It emerged that today she is married with children and living in another part of the country.

She had run away after her sister had died in an accident for which she blamed herself. Seventeen years later she came back and made peace with her family and

● The National Missing Persons Helpline is funded solely by charitable donatioo. Its freephone number is 0500 700 700. Message Home is a confidential freephone number for anyone missing who wishes to say they are alive and safe: 0500 700 740.



It sounded like the ultimate Chris Evans jape when he announced it on his hreakfast show on Virgin Radio: he wanted to buy the statioo to make sure he kept his

It was typically Chris to ask listeners to each send in some cash to help him buy it. "We have to buy the radio station by 19 November, otherwise we're out on our car," he said "We need to get this sorted out - this is not a joke. If you can lend us £50m quid between you, we need it."

Everyone had a good laugh about it and spokesmen dismissed it as a stunt. Less than a month later, Evans (above, left) announced that be bad snaffled the station from under Capital Radio's nose, taking a majority share worth £83m. He had got backing from Apax Partners and has just

signed a deal worth £25m for three years with Channel Four which means the new Ginger Media Group could become a reality. Quite a few people stopped laughing. Richard Branson (above right), who retained 45 per cent of Virgin Radio, said he had accepted Evans's bid because it appealed to the "maverick" in him.

The men have a lot in commoo: both cultivated that image, the outsider who hasn't lost touch with ordinary people, lives life to the full and make their own lives their unique selling point.

Every time a straw poll is taken for a putative president of a British republic, Lord Mayor of London or whatever, Bransoo is always up there. People like his beard, his jumpers, his attempts 10 sail a ballooo around the world including this

week's debacle when the balloon sailed off without him (Branson and the Virgin logo were once again emblazoned all over the front pages). We like Branson because

be says be wants to run the National Lot- or being accused of sexual harassment by tery on a not-for-profit basis or that he'll a former American employee or when he help come up with a solution for sport and tobacco sponsorship.

Without Branson, Virgin could not exist as it does: Branson is a walking, talking billboard - for himself. Yet at the same time the friendly exterior conceals an astute business man who is said to be "demanding" to work for.

Ordinary people like to think less

BY GLENDA COOPER

Are these the

eyes of happy

mavericks or

businessmen?

hard-nosed

on Virgin trains where lateness and cramped conditions are all too frequent,

about the con-

sumer's champion

receiving bad marks

from his passengers

failed to win the lottery bid. The fact that he's the last man in the

world you'd ask to get your balloon off the ground has so far done him no permanent damage.

Evans, for his part, has the image of radical funster and lager lad. But nobody could doubt that he is exceptionally driven and ambitious. Always an alert and

bright child, he speaks of his father's death wheo he was just 13 as "the shotgun which started the race". His obsessive nature started to drive

him towards one particular ambition - to be a Radio 1 DJ. He planned things carefully from the time he haunted Timmy Mallett who gave him his first job in Piccadilly Radio. His first job in London was for Radio Radio also then owned by Richard Branson back in 1988. He was poached by GLR but his big break came on the Big Breakfast earlier in the decade. The success of his show Don't Forget Your Toothbrush and then TFI Friday meant he was continually called the broadcast-

ing taleot of the decade. If Capital Radio lost out on Virgin because they didn't take Evans seriously, they

have only themselves to blame. His company Ginger Productioos is valued at £30m. He sells his own and other people's programmes to Chaonel 4 and Talk Ra-

Now the newly formed Ginger Media Group is planning a programme on supermodels on Channel 4, a series on golf as well as various quiz show ideas. Media insiders say that Ginger's ability to manage talented creative people mean that more are likely to flock to them.

He may have spent most of his time with showbizzy blondes in the past but at this week's No 10 bash he was seen talking to a woman of a rather different type - Elisabeth Murdoch, daughter of the ultimate media mogul. At the moment, for Evans the sky's the limit.

ard Vernon



such as "Dresden Style". "Real

Shocks" and "Let's Build a

Car" enhanced their reputation

but, unlike the Undertones and

the Buzzcocks, Swell Mans nev-

er capitalised on their pop sen-

sibility. They were musical

magpies, one minute emulating

T-Rex's heady melodies, the

next drifting into strange im-

provisations worthy of the

Krautrock giants Faust or Can.

hums, A Trip to Marineville

(1979) and Jane From Occupied

Europe (1980). Their bedroom

recordings, archives and John

Peel sessions were bowever

documented on compilations

entitled Whatever Happens Next,

Collision Time and Thain Out Of

It (rereleased in 1991) and at-

tracted something of a cult

following in Europe. More un-

expectedly, along with British

outfits like the Raincoats and

Gang of Four, they became

favourites on the emerging US

college radio scene of the

after an Italian tour. Nikki Sud-

den carried on with the Jaco-

hites, in the vein of the Faces,

the Rolling Stones and Bob Dy-

lan. Epic Soundtracks was a reg-

ular member but also played with

Red Krayola, Mayo Thomp-

son's experimental outfit, and re-

leased two solo singles. "Jelly

Babies" and "Rain Rain Rain".

Birthday Party guitarist Row-

land S. Howard and his broth-

er Harry who had reactivated

the radical Crime & The City So-

lution. He played on Just South

of Heaven (1985) and Room of

Lights (1986) and appeared in

Wim Wenders' evocative film

Wings of Desire (1987), per-

forming the haunting "Six Bells

Chime". The following year, he

followed the Howard brothers

into These Immortal Souls and

stayed six years, appearing on Get Lost (Don't Lie) (1987) and I'm

Never Gonna Die Again (1992).

In 1984, he joined the former

Swell Maps split up in 1980

early Eighties.

They only completed two al-

19/OBITUARIES

me bac Eric Laithwaite The White Rahbit take a whire the White Rahbit take a reverse to the Rahbit take a reverse to the White Rahbit take a reverse to the

Lancashire 14 June 1921; Assistant Lecturer. Manchester University 1950-53, Lecturer 1953-58, Senior Lecturer 1958-64; Professor of Heavy Electrical Engineering, Imperial College of Science and Technology 1964-86 (Emeritus); Professor of the Royal Institution 1967-76; married 1951 Sheila Goodie (two sons, two daughters); died Falmer, East Sussex 27 November 1997.

Eric Laithwaite shared his enthusiasm for engineering at every opportunity. He is remembered with affection by students he inspired at Manchester University, where he was Lecturer, then Senior Lecturer, from 1953 to 1964, and at Imin perial College, Loodon, where he was Professor of Heavy Elecin trical Engineering until his retirement in 1986. He enthused other audiences too, both prossional colleagues and the general public, but he liked most an audience of young people whom he might inspire

to pursue engineering careers. The Royal Institution's Christmas Lectures for Young People were begun in 1826 by Michael Faraday - one of Laithwaite's heroes - and Laithwaite gave the lectures in 1966. That year the BBC televised the series in full, and they have been televised each Christmas since. The 1966 lectures also appeared as a book, The Engineer in Wonderland. The title reflected the author's deep-seated belief that engineering was central to modem life: scientists can explain hings, but almost every manmade object is the work of an

lawyers contribute nothing). The chapter headings were all taken from Alice. Laithwaite was no philistine, but widely read: he delighted in linking en-

engineer (and he would some-

times add that accountants and

watch out of its waistcoat pockct: "It flashed across her mind that she had never before seen a rabbit with either a waistcoat pocket or a watch to take out of it." If Alice had not noticed she would never have had any adveotures: the engineer who notices things enters a Wonderland.

With that introduction, and a host of demonstrations where things could be noticed, Laithwaite hegan to explain the working of electric motors and generators to his young audience. He held the honorary title of Professor of Applied Electricity at the Royal Institution, and gave several Friday Evening Discourses. One was on butterflies - a hobby, but a subject on which be was a considerable expert. Eric Laithwaite was born in

1921 in Atherton, Lancashire, the son of a farmer. He happily retained his Lancastrian accent. He was educated at Kirkham Grammar School and the Regent Street Polytechnic, London. In 1941 he joined the Royal Air Force, and from 1943 was at the Royal Aircraft Establishment, Farnborough. where he worked on automatic pilots. It was probably at that time that he first developed the fascination with gyroscopes which remained for the rest of his life. He made several lifelong friends at the RAE, including the electrical engineer turned clergyman who conducted his funeral service, speaking warmly of his old friend.

In 1946 he went to read Electrical Engineering at Manchester University, graduating BSc in 1949 and MSc in 1950. when he joined the staff as an Assistant Lecturer. He worked at first under Professor F.C. Williams on the Ferranti Mk I computer, but his real interest was in power engineering.

His major achievements were with linear induction machines -linear motors. (Linear motors right ideas, but could never

saw the White Rahbit take a which travels in a line, rather than revolving on an axis.) He did not invent linear motors, but he made them practical and he believed they would provide the ideal propulsion unit for trains. In his most advanced designs the linear motor would propel the train, carry its weight and steer it without needing wheels. In fact the train would move

along a "magnetic river". In the 1960s a test track was huilt at Earith, in Camhridgeshire, largely governmentfunded, to test a vehicle which combined hovercraft principles with a linear motor drive. It was a bad time for railways in Britain. just after the Beeching cuts and with the political climate favouring roads. The project was cancelled and Laithwaite was hitterly disappointed.

In 1967, however, there was a new opening. The Motor Industry Research Association required a new crash testing facility in which a vehicle could be accelerated quickly to a precise speed. After 25 years' service the linear motor Laithwaite designed has recently been "retired" and. much to Laithwaite's delight, given to the Science Museum. By a strange coincidence it arrived at the museum store on the day of its designer's funeral. Engineering history was an-

other interest. When first at Im-

perial College he would show his students the variety of early electrical machines in the Science Museum "so my students never get the idea there is only one way to make a machine". As well as publishing numerous scholarly papers on linear motors he wrote a book on their history (A History of Linear Electric Motors, 1987). When the linear motor made by Charles Wheatstone in 1840 was discovered, Laithwaite enjoyed helping the present writer try it out in the college laboratory, and shared in the conclusion that Wheatstone had had the



current to run his machine. Another historical interest was the engineer Nikola Tesla. another independent-minded engineer who made great technical advances in conventional, rotating, electric motors, and who fell foul of the "establishment" for some of his un-

In 1986 Laithwaite was delighted to receive the Tesla Award of the (American) Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers "for contributions to the development and understanding of electric machines and especially of the linear induction motor".

In his later years at Imperi-

their behaviour had oever been adequately explained and they had properties which might be exploited in space travel. He sought to demonstrate his ideas and raise some of his questions in a Friday Evening Discourse at the Royal Institution. The attempt brought him much criticism and some personal hurt when colleagues dissociated themselves from him. But he persisted and, as a colleague observed recently, some of his questions remain unanswered.

On Laithwaite's retiring from Imperial College Professor B.V. Jayawant offered him laboratory facilities at the collapsing in the laboratory. gineering and literature. Alice are machines with a moving part have obtained sufficient electric al College Laithwaite pursued School of Engineering at Sus-

his interest in gyroscopes; he felt sex University, an easy train ride from his home in Bognor Regis. There Laithwaite enjoyed his last 10 years, continuing his research with gyroscopes and with linear motors. Only a few weeks ago they obtained a contract from Nasa for research into the feasibility of using linear motors to launch shuttles and satellites into low orbit. As Laithwaite remarked, 'It came 10 years ton late", but Nasa's interest gave him great pleasure. and his colleagues at Sussex will continue the work.

Laithwaite worked to the end, and died without regaining consciousness after -- Brian Bowers

Epic Soundtracks

Kevin Paul Godfrey (Epic Soundtracks), singer, songwriter, drummer, pis born Croydon, Surrey 23 March 1959; died London 6 November 1997.

In the mid-Seventies, many a punk rocker used a pseudonym to keep signing on the dole while making music. The Damned featured Rat Scahies and Captain Sensible, the Sex Pistols were fronted by one Johnny Rotten and the Clash had Joe Strummer at the helm. Epic Soundtracks, who was found dead in his flat last month, had been a founder member of Swell Maps, the original DIY indie kids who emerged in late 1977.

Part of the second wave of British punk, the band huilt a loyal following and became regulars on the John Peel show. In the Eighties, their endearing, ramsbackle, hrittle style greatly influeoced American acts like Sonic Youth, REM, Dinosaur Jr, the Lemonheads, Nirvana and Pavement Later. as a member of the cult bands the Jacobites, Crime & The City Solution and These Immortal Souls as well as in his moody solo recordings, Epic Soundtracks kept the flame of independent music flickering throughout Europe.

Born Kevin Godfrey, Epic Soundtracks concocted his pseudonym by mixing Epic Records and Soundtrucks, his favourite album by the avantgarde German group Can, With his elder hrother Nicholas, who took up the alias Nikki Sudden, he would while away the afternoons in Solihull making music. Nikki played guitar and sang while Epic "drummed on anything that would make a noise, cardboard boxes, telephone bonks. We started out in 1972 hut Epic only got a snare drum the following year, Gradually he built up his drum-kit but he also



Soundtracks: spiky

played piano very well," recalls Sudden. The duo tried out different names hut settled on Swell Maps.

Various school and art college friends drifted in and out hut the bassist Jowe Head was the only other musician joining the brothers for their first gig at Birmingham's Barbarellas on Boxing Day 1977. Taking advantage of Rough Trade's emerging alternative distribution set-up, the hand released their début single, the infectious "Read About Seymour", oo their own Rather label and, in 1978, found their spiky, energetic sound at the top of the indie charts. Quirky follow-ups

His fine drumming greatly contributed to the outfit's deranged, psychotic sound. But he had become frustrated with the sporadic nature of Rowland's activities and struck out on his

own with a somewhat gentler sound. Sleeping Star (1994) and Change My Life (1996) and the excellent collection of demos entitled Debris (1995) saw Soundtracks in a more intimist vein. In 1994, he toured with Evan Dando of the Lemonheads. More recently, he had played all over Europe with the guitarist Kevin Junior and demoed enough tracks for a fifth album. A tribute concert is scheduled for the second week of January at the Garage in London.

Geoff Travis, Pulp's manager and former Rough Trade supremo, paid a fond tribute to Epic Soundtracks. "Swell Maps were an important part of the early Rough Trade," he said.

"Theirs was the second album we ever released. They were a wonderful band and played great gigs. Epic was an incredible drummer . . . His only fault was that he seemed to take everything so hard. He was really a lovely man, sweet, gentle and fragile; one of the great origical indie spirits."

- Pierre Perrone

Richard Vernon



Richard Evelyn Vernon, actor: born Reading, Berkshire 7 March 1925: married 1955 Benedicta Hoskyns (one son one daughter; marriage dissolved 1989); died London

4 December 1997.

In an acting career spanning At 18, he enlisted in the Royal brought character and distinction, plus a roguish wit and droll humour, to the aristocrats, ministry officials and military men for which his tall, distinguished bearing made him particularly well suited. He will be fondly remembered for such roles as the disapproving bowler-hatted city gent to whom John Lennon says "Give us a kiss" in A Hard Day's Night, the eccentric white-haired Slartihartfast of The Hitch-Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy, or more recently Joanna Lumley's father in Class Act.

and Reading School. His family had a seagoing background, and Vernon's love of sailing equalled his passion for acting.

over 40 years, Richard Vernon Navy Volunteer Reserve and served during the final months of the Second World War. Stationed in Kowloon at the war's end, he produced, directed and starred in a production of Shaw's Hearthreak House for the Combined Services Club, causing his commanding officer to comment at the end of his service. "Vernon is an excellent dinghy helmsman and amateur actor: in his spare time he performs his duties satisfactorily." After training at the Central

School of Speech and Drama. Vernon made his London stage Born in Reading in 1925, he debut in 1950 in the play Stratwas educated at Leighton Park ton, and three years later had great success as Mr Darling (one of his favourite roles) in Peter Pan at the Scala. Other West End successes included Any Other Business (1959, as Charles Parkin MP), and an effectively droll comic performance as Richard Greatham in the 1968 revival of Coward's Hay Fever.

His screeo career gained momentum in the Sixties with roles in such films as 1 illage of the Damued (1960), the Edgar Wallace thriller Clue of the Twisted Candle (1960), Losey's The Servani (1963) and in 1964 three major films. Asquith's The Yellow Rolls Rewee and the superior Bond movie Goldfinger (as a ministry official), not to mention his memorable cameo in the Beatles film.

On radio his many roles included Lord Emsworth in sexeral P.G. Wodehouse serials, but it was on television that Vernon found greatest fame. In 1965 he starred in the comedy-thriller

series The Man in Room 17, in Debutante and later roles inwhich he and Michael Aldridge were two spy seekers who tracked their quarry from the seclusion of Room 17 by means of their superior intellects. Subsequently Vernon was featured in such great successes as Upstairs Downstairs (1971-75). Edward the Seventh (1975), The Duchess of Duke Smeet (1976-77), and, with waist-length hair and strikingly earbed in flowing robes, the eccentric Slartibartfast in the science-fiction satire The Hirch-Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy (1981).

In 1955, while acting in Canterbury, he married an actress in the company. Benedicta Leigh, by whom he had two children, a boy and a girl. In the mid-Seventies he toured with Phyllis Calvert in The Reluction

Gandhi (1982), the play Pack of Lies (1983) and on television John Mortimer's epic series chronicling English life since the Forties, Paradise Postponed (1986), and such series as Casualty and Lovejov. Vernon continued acting until the onset of Parkinson's two

cluded the films The Pink Pan-

ther Strikes Again (1976) and

years ago. In 1986, while appearing with David Jason in the West End revival of the farce Dry Rot. Vernon was featured on This Is Your Life to which the actress Wendy Craig, who starred with him in the television series Nanny (1981), testified to his genial nature and commented, "He had the wickedest twinkle of any actor I've ever worked with."

Tom Vallance

MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Birchs, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorial services, Wedding anniversaries, in rial services, Wedding anniversuries, in Memorium) should be sent in writing to the Gazette Editor, The Independent, I. Cainada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL, telephoned to 071-293 2012 (24-hour answering machine 077-293 2012) or faxed to 077-293 2010, and are charged at 66.50 a line (VAT extra). OTHER Gazette announcements (notices, functions, Forthcoming marriages, Marriages) must be submitted in writing (or faxed) and are charged at 10 a line, VAT extra. They should be accompanied by a daytime relephone number.

Appointments Mr Thomas Young, 10 he British

ligh Commissioner to the Repub-Mr lan Whitehead, to be British High Commissioner to the Co-operative Republic of Guyana. Sir Murray Stuart-Smith, 10 be Treasurer of Gray's Inn; Mr

Martin Collins QC, to be Vice-Sir David Calcutt QC, to be Treasurer of the Middle Temple; Mr Justice Ian Kennedy, to be Deputy Treasurer, Mr Justice Pumfrey, 10

he a Master of the Bench. Lady Appleyard, Mr John R.H. Bond and Baroness Perry of Southwark, to be Governors of the English-Speaking Union of the

Changing of the Guard TODAY: The Household Cavalry Mount ACME The Household Cavalry Muni-ted Regiment mounts the Cocen's Life Creard at Horse Guards, 11 am; 1st Bu-latine. The Royal Regiment of Wales mounts the Queen's Guard, at Bucking-have Palece, 11-20am, band provided by the State Gords, TOMORROW: The Household Cavalry Manuscot Regiment mounts the Ouera's Life Guard at Horse Guards, Hims.

Birthdays TODAY: Prince Karim, the Aga

Khan, 61; Sir Terence Beckett, former Director General, CBL 74: Mr Howard Brenton, playwright, 55; General Arnold Brown, former leader, Salvation Army, 84; Lord Bullock, historian, 83; Mr Jim Davidson, comedian, 43; Sir Brian Fall, Principal, Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford, 60; Mr John Francombe, broadcaster and former jockey, 45; Mr Walter Girven, former Chief Constable, Wiltshire, 59; Miss Anouska Hempel, actress, hotelier and designer. 56: Dr Douglas Latto, surgeon and gynaecolo-gist, 84; Mr Robert Lindsay, actor, 48; Professor Sir William McCrea, astronomer. 93; Mr Alec Monk, former chief executive, Tri-Delta Corporation, 55; Sir Brian Pitman, chief executive, Lloyds TSB Group, 66; Mr Christopher Phummer, actor, 68; Sir Humphrey Prideaux, former chairman, Morland and Co. 82: Lord Renwick of Clifton, former ambassador to the United States, 60; Mr George Shultz, former US Secretary of State, 77: Professor Geoffrey Sims, former vice-Chancellor, Sheffield University. 71; Ms Dari Taylor MP, 53; Maj-Gen Sir David Thome, Director-General, Commonwealth Trust, 64; Mr Dick Van Dyke, actor, 72; General Sir Peter Whiteley, former Commander in-Chief, Allied Forces Northern Europe, 77; Miss Paula Wilcox, actress, 48; Mr Brian Wilson

MP, Minister of State. Scottish

Office, 40 TOMORROW: Captain

the Hon Sir Nicholas Beaumont, di-

rector. High Gosforth Park, 68; Ms

Christine Butler MP, 54; Professor

Richard Cassily, operatic tenor, 70;

General Sir Desmond Fitzpatrick,

former Deputy Supreme Allied

Commander, Europe, 85: The Right

Rev John Grindrad, former Arch-

bishop of Brisbane, 78; Sir Anthony Kershaw, former MP, \$2; Miss Bar-

bara Leigh-Hunt, actress. 62: Mi Thomas McAvov MP. Comptroller of HM Household, 54: Sir Malcolm McIntosh, chief executive. CSIRO, 52: Mr Charles Morris, former gov ernment minister. 7t: Mr Alberto Morrocco, painter, 80; Sir John Os-born, former MP, 75; Dame Ruth Railton, founder of the National Youth Orchestra, S2: Miss Janette Scott, actress. 59: Mr Stan Smith, tennis champion, 51; Sir Simon Towneley, former Lord-Lieutenant of Lancashire, 76; Miss Rosalyn Tureck, conductor, lecturer and writer, 83,

Anniversaries

TODAY: Births: William Drum mond of Hawthornden, poet, 1585. Deaths: Dr Samuel Johnson, lexigrapher, 1784. On this day: Ita-Marcioni patented the first ice-cream cone in the United States. 1903. Today is the Feast Day of Si Aubert of Cambrai. St Eustrauus of Schastea, St Judocus or Josse, St Lucy and St Othilis or Odilia, TOMOR-ROW: Births: Nostradamus (Michel de Nostredamel astrologer and prophet, 1503, Deaths: Stanley, first Farl Baldwin of Bewdley, statesman, 1947. On this day: women in Britain voted for the first time at the General Election, 1918. Tomorrow is the Feast Day of Saints Fingar or Gwinnear and Phiala, St John of the Cross. St Nicasius of Rheims, St Spiridion and St Venantius Fortunatus.

Lectures

British Museum: Paul Collins. "The Rise of Civilisation in the Ancien Near East 1.1.pm.

TOMORROW Tate Gallery: Laurence Bradbury. "An Anatomy of Human Expres-

FAITH & REASON

How Joshua claimed a 20th-century victim

is the Bible merely an instrument of oppression in the wrong hands - or is there something fundamentally dodgy about bits of it? Paul Vollely reflects.

General Lin, who founded the Chinese Kingdam 3,000 years ago, went to war with his army to compler a land. They came to some great thes with high walls and strong fornesses. The Chinese War-God appeared to General Litt in his dream and promised him victory, ordering him to kill all in ing souls in the vittes because those people belonged to other religious. General Lan and his soldiers took the towns and turns destroyed all that was in therein, both man and woman, coung and old, and ox and sheep and ass, with the edge of the sword.

 Do you think General Lin and his soldiers acted rightly or not Explain why!

The question cost Professor George Tamarin his chair, and made him the last victim of Joshua's conquest of Jericho. For he asked it as part of a sociological survey of Israeli schoolchildren. He then gave them an account of Joshua's campaign to claim the Promised Land from its existing inhabitants.

The two stories are, of course, almost identical. Some bil per cent of the Jewish students insisted Joshua was quite al Lin was wrong. The outcome, Tamarin contended, showed that chauvinism influences moral judgment and that uncritical teaching of the Bible forms prejudices.

Tel Aviv university sacked him. The story is told in Michael Prior's book The Bible and Colonialism published by Shelfield Academic Press this week. Its essential point is that the Jewish scriptures make clear that the Promised Land was stolen from someone else. God announces in Exodus that he has come down to deliver the Israelites "to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the

The paradigm. Prior argues, has been used to justify conquest down the ages from the expeditions of the conquistadores in Latin America and Eunapean colonial adventures throughout Africa and Asia. The Prussians used it in Poland, Puritan preachers in North America referred to native Indians as Amalekites and Canaanites, who, if they refused to be converted, were worthy of annihilation. More recently the notion has been used by the Dutch Reform Church to justify apartheid in ry through the eyes of the Canaanites a radically different situation."

Palestinians in their homeland and by Scrhs beot on ethnic cleansing in Bosnia. A sense of "superiority over the natives" moves from a sacred text to become part of national mythology and therefore a "fact" of history.

Even liberation theologians, when they began in Gustavo Gutiérrez's cal studies of Iroo Age settlements in words "doing theology from the uoderside of history", used the Exodus as their prime metaphor for God's being on the side of the poor in their struggle gainst colonialism, dictatorship and ecocomic domination. Is the Bible misinterpreted, asks Prior, or is it intrinsically oppressive?

Desmond Tutu is fond of saving: "When the whites arrived in Africa they had the Bible and we had the land, They said: 'Close your eyes and let us pray.' And when we opened them we had the Bible and they had the land . . . But 1 think we got the better deal." Not everyone agrees. Many young South African blacks consider the Bible an oppressive document and the Old Testament is seen as a Zionist text to such an extent that it has become almost repugnant to many Palestinian Christians. Like the American Indians, the Aborigines in

right, but 75 per cent thought Gener South Africa, by the Jews to oppress the and other peoples who already lived in

the Promised Land. Prior's solution is that of classic liberalism. The hiblical narrative is not simple history hut a series of legends, epics and myths reconstructed from the past by authors to express their own religious and political ideologies. Archaeologithe area indicate cootinuity between the Canaanite and Israel settlements, with oo ethnic distinctioo between them, and no evidence of invasioo from outside or revolution from within. Historically a multiplicity of ethnic identities coalesced into the People of Israel only under the threat of Assyrian invasion.

But myths can he more useful than facts. "The Promised Land was not given to the Israelites - they had to fight for it." I was once told by a theologian involved in struggle for land among the poor in Brazil. "To them the city states of the Canaanites were symbols of feudal exploitation." It was about class struggle.

There is no document of civilisation which is not at the same time a document of harbarism, said the Marxist Walter Benjamin. Perhaps more hope lies with the words of Gutiérrez: "The Promised Land," he said, "is not sim-Australia, and many others see the sto-ply a new country, it is also the gift of TΗ SA 18

Sir: As a working single parent 1, personally, believe there to be no choice - I work to pay the mortgage, the bills and, ironically, the childcare costs. How-

essary to my survival.

Sir: Harriet Harman says: "Lone

same reason as married women

London SE22

ever. I totally accept that it is extremely difficult for many single parents - those with more than one child, those with children who've suffered prolonged accounting principles of a Vicperiods of illness, those without the benefit of understanding em-

ployers and colleagues and those whose rates of pay fall well below the national average. Instead of the Government alienating lone parents, once again, they should initially have looked at means-testing benefit claimants across the board to reduce costs. I myself am eligihle for £68.40 per mouth, which, although very nice, is not nec-

public finance consists in restricting public expenditure. They insist on exerting control throughout Whitehall and local SARAH SMITH government. They will not permit any hypothecation, they hate giving up any tax. They insist on controlling all borrowing. mothers want to work for the

Treasury has been consistently unsuccessful in its economic polcountry gives such powers to the national book-keepers.

sensible Ministry of Finance. The of advertisers and feminists.

There were no hutterflies in Burger King in Heathrow's Terminal One in the early hours of yesterday morning, as far as we know. The famous illustration of chaos . theory imagines how the fluttering of a butterfly's wings could cause a hurricane a thousand miles away. It is a mathematical speculation intended to help understand the unpredictability of natural

> pattern or another. Now we have to invent a new chaos theory to help understand the unpredictability of buman systems. Yesterday, a small fire in a hurger bar stranded people in Aberdeen, grounded planes in South Africa and snarled up the motorways around west London. Anyone with the time and inclination to listen to or watch global, 24-hour news services could follow the ripples from a relatively trivial event as they spread out in distance and scale. There is a childish pleasure in watching a chain reaction develop in a series of events, some predictable, some unexpected. Of course, the disruption was serious, and inconvenient, and will cost husinesses and individuals millions of pounds. Shares in BAA fell 13p before bouncing hack as investors realised the losses were covered by insurance. But it

> systems - how a tiny perturbation could

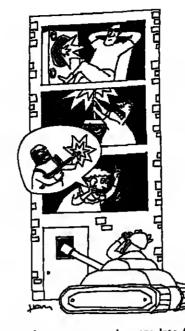
make a difference between one climate

was fun to watch the ripples. It was fun in the way that Heath Robinson's unlikely contraptions are fun, or the children's game in which a marble rolls down a slide. tips a see-saw which swings a boot which kicks a cage which wohhles down a pole to catch a mouse.

Because Heathrow is the husiest huh of world air travel, and even though Terminal One mostly handles domestic and European flights, a fire in a hurger bar air duct caused global gridlock. Well, if not gridlock, then a premonition of what might happen when the world becomes even more interdependent, more criss-crossed by webs of communication and transport.

With 180,000 people flying in and out of Heathrow every day, the greasy glitch touched all sorts of lives at random. John and Gillian Kernon did not manage to get from Somerset to Nuremberg for the Christmas fair. Our own political editor found himself in the House of Commons when he should have been in Luxembourg annoying the Prime Minister.

And, hecause there is only one road in and out of Heathrow through the tunnel under the runways, traffic tailed hack all round the M25 and along the M4. As a result, there was an eerie calm in the streets of central London, because morning commuter traffic could not get through. Who



20/LEADER & LETTERS

knows how many people were late for work, how many delivery deadlines were missed, how many millions were lost?

The growing complexity of human systems is understood by terrorists, which was why the IRA, in the days when it knocked on the door of Downing Street with mortar bombs, also launched a mor-

lar attack on Heathrow airport. Between the time when it was fighting a war against the "occupying" British army, and the time it demanded photocopying facilities in the House of Commons, the IRA went through a phase of targeting the nodal points of British social and economic organisation in order to cause maximum disruption. The attempt to blow up six electricity substations around London would have been a hit more than the flap of a hutterfly's wing, but it was intended to cause dislocation out of all proportion to the trigger event.

It is salutary to be reminded of the frailty of complex systems. It was a tiny flicker of static electricity which destroyed the TWA jumbo jet over Long Island, according to the latest theory. A newspaper like this one relies on hundreds of computers linked by wires and switches. If one "computer server" crashes, the whole system stops. So the people who know what a server is have devised hackup systems and contingency plans, and another layer of unpredictable complexity is added. There is nothing new in this: in the old days of bot metal and typewriters the print unions understood too well how vulnerable the whole process was at certain links in the Heath Rohinsonian

And the hutterfly's wing principle of momentous consequences flowing from trivial events has always given Pate the appearance of inevitable and logical mfolding. A few years further back in history, the Romans understood how the genes which shaped Cleopatra's nose started a war and destroyed an empire. Even the First World War seemed some thing of an overreaction, to say the least to the anarchist's assassination of Arch. duke Ferdinand.

What has changed, thought is the speed with which a whole city, or world. wide Internet communications can be brought to a halt by an escalating scries of coincidences. Humanity is entired in a constant battle to stop the completes. tems it creates from seizing up. Traffic : lights are computerised and linked to road sensors to keep the jams crawling. New bits are being plugged into the Internet to keep it growing faster than junk e-mail slows it down. New computer programs are being written to override the mistakes made by the old ones.

So the next time someone complains about the traffic and says, "It's chaos out there," point out how the non-linear dynamics of road transport are helping us understand the fuzzy logic of human systems. They will thank you for it.

LETTER FROM

THE EDITOR

Letters I need to answer individually are treated as fol-

lows: stuffed in a plastic file,

which is stuffed into my brief-

case, and then dealt with via

tape recorder as I go home

at night. This is normally ef-

course, not the answers - hut

it does mean a few get lost.

Many essential things seem to

slide into the all-purpose

mulch of forgotten hills,

sweet-wrappings, corporate

memoranda and similar

scrumpled detritus in life's

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Labour's benefit cut

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DEPUTY EDITOR: COLIN HUGHES.

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Sir: Plans to restrict welfare benefits to lone parents need to he considered in the context of the government strategy to bring back the excluded sections of our society into the included fold.

Recognition of the dominance of the market economy and the necessity of being a productive part of it has had implications for all of us. The modemising element of the New Labour Party appears to now accept that the vast majority of us have to work. It recognises the wastefulness of large sections of the population living long-term on welfare benefits. At the height of North Sea Oil exploitation the annual total tax revenues were roughly equal to total spending on welfare benefits.

New Labour appears to he striving to be the New Workers Party. It seeks to represent all of us who work for a living while at the same bringing the economically excluded back into the included fold. This is the central strategy of the "new thinking" or the "big idea".

Reducing benefits to lone parents is partly about restorclaimants who are required to register as unemployed. It will remove the current anomalous situation where an unemployed two-parent family receives a lower pro rata rate of benefit than a one-parent family. In the long term, both groups will be the target of further strategies to help hring them back into the inclusive world of opportunities and responsibilities.

ROGER HOPKINS BURKE Lecturer in Criminal Justice

Scarman Centre for the Study of Public Order The University of Leicester

Sir. The events of Wednesday evening in Parliament represent once again the imposition by the Treasury of dominance over Parliamentary government. From within Whitehall I watched this happen to the Wilson and Heath governments. The philosophy of the British Treasury, founded on the

torian parish council, has remained unchanged for over a century. They seek to control all public finance and dominate the political agenda. They hate all public expenditure, but particularly transfer payments - persons, social security and welfare. They persuade each succeeding government that sound

And the irony is that the

work - for a better standard of living for their children." As a docicy. We have prospered in spite tor and as the father of three of them. No other advanced children, I say if women really want to provide a better standard of living for their children they I, like many, thought that this should aim to stay at home to pro-

government would be strong vide the love that children need, enough to send the Treasury like plants need water, and not mandarins packing and create a worry about the specious claims



Pride of the Clyde

Sir. The decision by the Ministry ing financial equity with those of Defence to shortlist either Manchester or Leith as the final resting place for the Royal Yacht Britannia (report, 11 December) appears to be based solely on the ability of a wealthy company in each of these places to advance money for preservation. Scant attention seems to have been paid

first signs were encouraging,

with the Bank of England given

responsibility for monetary pol-

icy. But could not last. Wednes-

day evening was their reply.

RICHARD GRAHAM

to British maritime heritage issues and more particularly to that of the river Clyde.

Britannia's importance, to any other place, is only as a very distinguished royal yacht. To Clydeside she is of great significance as a fine turbine-powered steamship created on this renowned shipbuilding river.

It was the development of steam power on the Clyde that,

The most important job to

he done in this life is to parent

one's children and if the moth-

er. whether Cabinet minister,

lawyer, doctor, nurse or clean-

er, tires herself out doing a joh

of secondary importance, her

ability to nurture her children

will be severely compromised.

strong individuals - weak fam-

ilies produce weak individuals.

Sir: The approach the Govern-

ment is taking to the problem

of single mothers is quite wrong.

What they conspicuously need

is not work or benefit, but a rich

cates that the wives of men with

substantial off-shore investments

are considerably better of than

those on benefit or in work.

What is needed, clearly, is a se-

ries of targeted Welfare to Mar-

riage initiatives. Dateline could

be contracted to provide suitable

introductions. Tax incentives

would be required and the laws

on bigamy may have to be relaxed

to allow public-spirited men to

These generous and com-

passionate proposals are at

least as sensible as those before

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Parliament.

PHIL TRORY

Alcester, Warwickshire

support more than one wife.

Research conclusively indi-

C STEPHEN FROST

Colwyn Bay, Clwyd

hushand.

Strong families produce

from 1812 onwards, led to the Clyde becoming the most famous shipbuilding river in the world. By around 1900 half of all steamships in the world were Clyde-huilt. There is not at present any adequate material tribute. The Clyde Heritage Trust has proposed the creation of the Clyde Maritime Heritage Park at the Govan dry

docks complex in Glasgow. This

development would be an international-class attraction, drawing some 350,000 visitors annually, and creating 600 jobs.

In this exciting development the ship taking pride of place would require at least some of these qualifies: she must be Clyde-huilt; of reasonable proportions; a good example of a particular power era; preferably having been well maintained

during her life: with historic associations and a unique ability to attract visitors.

Britannia is the only existing Clyde-huilt ship possessing all of these qualities. She represents the last chance for Clydeside to acquire a suitable example of over thirty thousand ships it has huilt.

DAVID B. PRICE Cardross, Dunbartonshire

Meyer will have to wait too long

before be sees carriages, full of

people, being carried in a sim-

ilar manner for the same rea-

GEOFF COX

Rugby, Warwickshire

Fuel of the future

that coal has no future".

Sir: You comment (Business

Outlook, 4 December) that

"the Government should admit

coal is almost certainly the fuel

of the future. Reserves of coal

are about 10 times the reserves

of oil, and coal will still be avail-

able long after both oil and gas

have been exhausted. It there-

fore must make sense to keep

our productive mines open now

rather than have them shut so

that the reserves they contain

more expensive to produce

than ours, recognises this and

subsidises its coal industry to

Sir: Donald MacIntyre thinks

"Blair is rather good at using

charm" (Comment. 9 Decem-

ber). Which leads to the con-

clusion that Camus predicted

the nature of the Blairite suc-

cess in The Fall: "You know

what charm is: a way of getting

the answer yes without having

asked any clear question."

keep it going.

Charming

CHRIS DODWELL

Germany, whose coal is far

are permanently closed off.

Taking the world as a whole

Destructive badgers

gers spreading bovine TB (report, 1 December; Letters, 6 December) there is no doubt about the massive damage that badgers are doing to gardens in Somerset.

Before the moratorium on culling was initiated in 1973 badger numbers were kept low by farmers and landowners. Then, freed from predation, badgers multiplied rapidly. They moved into my garden in 1990, taking fruit, vegetables and flower bulbs. They fouled the paths with dungpits and exterminated gardenfriendly wildlife such as

hedgehogs and slow-worms. Across Somerset, 145 garpublic under the National Gardens Scheme. I questioned 54 of them: 81 per cent had a badger problem similar to mine and getting worse.

The survey by the People's Trust for Endangered Species interpreted the 77 per cent increase in the British badger population since 1988 as a "recovery" from low levels caused by gamekeepers in the 19th century. This is incorrect. Somerset parish accounts for the 17th and 18th centuries frequently itemise payments for the destruction of "vermin" (animals which robbed land-hungry peasants of their produce). Badgers were worth

a shilling each, a fortune to a

Badger meat was always a delicacy, to man and in earlier centuries to wolves and other carnivores. So badgers never swarmed unmolested across England, and the current popu-

lation increase is not a recovery. It follows that badgers are commoner now than ever before. Conversely, farmers and gardeners have never been so powerless to resist their destructiveness Dr WILLIE STANTON Westbury-sub-Mendip,

Trains by road

deners open their gardens to the Sir: There is a good reason why Dr N P Meyer (letter, 11 December) saw a train being transported by road. The high track access charges imposed by Railtrack under the privatisation agreements have led to the preposterous position whereby it is often cheaper to transport trains needing repair on lowloaders than to haul them over the track.

> This is the same sort of internal pricing structure which has caused BBC radio programme makers to find it cheaper to go out and buy CDs than to rent them from the BBC record library.

Clearly, logic plays little part in public service husinesses. M A REDHEAD London N8

Sir: With the sight of railway cngines being transported by lorry hecoming increasingly MICHAEL HARRIS common I don't think Dr N P Manchester

trouser turn-ups. One missive I read but

have lost was a complaint ahont Paul McCann's de-Emin a week ago. McCann said that she was on television The reader said he was a comparison deeply offensive to Clyde welders. Well, I see the point. A lot of welders would object to being compared to salt-tongued conceptual artists. Soon we will be saying, "as drunk as a neo-minimalist, with the language to match". Mr McCann points out, however, that his granddad was a Clyde welder

and he knows a thing or two about the subject. This, however, touches again on the whole question of readers' complaints and how newspapers deal with them. This week The Guardian sent us the conclusion of a lengthy report by its new ombudsman into the behaviour of its deputy foreign editor Victoria Brittain. Her bank account has been used to ferry money from the Libyans to fund a libel action against this paper by the former head of the Ghanaian security service, a chum of hers called Kojo Tsikata. Rum stuff, you will agree. The libel action

The omhudsman accepted her assurances that she had no idea of where the chunky sums of money came from and hadn't asked her friend Tsikata - though he

against us continues.

says this last "appears curious". He has established that Brittain actively managed the money and talked "in the most general terms" about the libel case with the lawyer concerned but concludes that fective - the system, of she was "some way from being a significant player" in the action against The Independent. She was silly, naive and behaved "inappropriately as a senior journalist". But not a had woman.

Putting to one side my own feelings on the matter-I think Brittain hehaved rather worse than "inappropriately" - does this first major report vindicate the use of scription of the artist Tracey, an ombudsman? Alan Rushridger appointed The Guardian's one for good and "as drunk as a Clyde welder ,, honourable reasons and alwith the language to match". lowed a highly critical report about one of his journalists welder and had worked on to be published in other pathe Clyde and found the pers - and all credit to him

So, should The Indepen-

dent appoint an ombudsman too? Well, as it happens, we used to: Sir Gordon Downey, who ombuds'd MPs, cut his teeth in this respect on Indy hacks. But in the end, during Andreas Whittam Smith's time as editor, we decided to end the practice. Why? Simply because we felt that it was the editor's job to investigate, discipline and respond directly. Newspapers are dictatorships, henign or otherwise, and the ombudsman couldn't take the editor's decisions for him. If the editor was wrong, or dilatory, or simply tried to hide the newspaper's failings, then he in turn would he dealt with either by the Press Complaints Commission or the board of the company.

This rule adds an hour or two to a conscientious editor's day but still seems to me; to be broadly right. I have no one else to pass complaints to for investigation or conclusion. On the other hand, of course, I can always lose them among the sweetiewrappings.

Andrew Marr

QUOTE UNQUOTE

I don't want my party to become as terrified, as dependent on one person, as Labour has become on Tony Blair - William

I wasn't put in to this job to wring my hands and beat my chest and discuss when I last cried - Harriet Harman, Social Security

I look forward to seeing a thousand Conservative consciences bloom as we look at the proper, accurate, fair reform of the welfare state - John Major, former Prime Minister

I think I've attained such a level of celebrity status that cinema can only lessen it - Eric Cantona, former Manchester United soccer star, contemplating whether he is now too important to be-

Painting will always be there, but with photographs you can take millions and zillions of images, whereas in painting you can cock up - Gillian Wearing, whose video "Sorty Minutes" Sience" won her the Turner Prize

It's obviously not the comeback he had in mind but intil then 1 thought he had done a sound job - Nigel Spackman, Sheffield United boss, after Michel Vank marked his return after a year out by scoring an own goal and getting sent off

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حبكتا من الاجل

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21/COMMENT

It's official: men are brutes, women are a higher life form



DAVID **AARONOVITCH** THE FEMALE ORGASM

There was an article in this newspaper yesterday about a woman who once suffered involuntary orgasms. Inevitably, like all newspaper articles concerning the female orgasm, it was illustrated by that scene from the movie When Harry Met Sally in which Sally demonstrates to Harry - in a packed diner - how the female climar can be faked. (It's an interesting feature of our relative attitudes to these things that there is no corresponding image that could accompany a piece concerning the male orgasm. But if I'm wrong. I do not wish to be corrected.)

Now, many people - mostly younger men - have orgasms when they are not exactly ready. Time, or the recital of the England World Cup squad, usually overcomes this problem. But that is not what we are talking about. No, imagine for a moment what it would be like to have orgasms completely out of the blue - WHAM - just like that, with no warning, and no matter what you were doing.

It would be inconvenient, would it not? Experiencing an orgasm might be difficult to disguise from fellow passengers in lifts and trains, or from colleagues at work. The tell-tale flush, the stertorous breathing, the sudden cries of "Oh God, darling, I love you!" might each individually not betray you, hut combined would certainly raise eyebrows. Friends might stop laviting you to their dinner parties, for fear of what might happen as you were introduced to Germaine Greer, say, or Trevor Phillips.

The embarrassment, however, would be as nothing compared with the considerable dangers. It is perilous enough to specze while driving on the motorway: the eyes close for a fraction of a second, the body convulses, and - a-tishoo - bang, into the back of that Lada. So what would happen were you to find yourself in the throes of an unexpected sexual experience - involving (dependmg on gender) rapid tumescence, vast stimulation and climax - hardly bears thinking about. One thing alone is certain: were the condition to become widespread, many more cars would display stickers bearing the legend, "keep your distance".

It is little wonder, then, that the woman concerned (let us call her Ms X) eventually I am assured, by those that know, that it went to her doctor, and - some time after-

wards - appeared as a case discussed in the latest edition of The Lancet. For what the boffins discovered when they scanned Ms X's brain was very interesting. As our own health editor explained, she had a "deformed artery in the right temporal pole of the brain". This had ruptured, causing epilepsy, which in turn had triggered the orgasms. This knowledge meant that doctors could more accurately pinpoint the part of the brain that controls the female orgasm. And it is located in one of the most sophisticated and evolutionarily advanced

But the male orgasm isn't. That is (for want of a better word) the rub. For, in the single known case of involuntary orgasm in a man, the problem was clearly linked back to the hypothalamus. And, in brain terms, apparently you don't get much more primitive and basic than the hypothalamus. We blokes had hypothalami when we were fish.

Are you getting this? We should conclude from all this that the male orgasm is ancient, animal, and instinctive. A necessary occurrence, it is no more a product of consciousness than is peristalsis. It is a thing of caves and sloping foreheads, a necessary and unlovely thing, that can be invoked without disturbing the intellect. This explains why boys can have orgasms in their sleep.

The female orgasm, on the other hand, is a product of evolution, of civilisation almost. It is not essential for procreation, but it requires subtle interaction between the brain and the hody. Indeed, it is - as the deputy editor remarked to me yesterday of a "higher order".

This raises two thoughts. Well, one question and a thought.

The question is, why did the female orgasm develop at all? What is it for? Most physiological changes to the human hody have happened for a reason, so what's the reason here? Was the problem that, as humanity evolved, and poetry, music and art were first developed, the sensitive females found themselves extremely unwilling to submit to the animal ministrations of a whole lot of self-pleasuring males? Was the orgasm thus conjured into being by a Nature that regarded it as a way of giving vomen a stake in intercourse?

And here's the thought. What if the female orgasm is still evolving? The male one, stuck down there in the horrid old hypothalamus, is becalmed sometime in the Mesozoic period or whatever, while the female one could be becoming ever more complex, culturally differentiated and - let's face it, given world overpopulation - bloody difficult to provoke. One day, only male novelists, scientists or journalists of exquisite manners and enormous beauty, will be able to induce orgasm externally in the most ordmary woman. Which may be fine for me,

but is a bit rough on the rest of you. While you digest that one, I'd better tell you how Ms X's story ended. The medics prescribed a drug called Carbamazapine. used in the treatment of epilepsy, and soon the unwanted comings went. She is said to be much happier and calmer.

But, given where we may all be heading. wouldn't it now be appropriate for scientists to search for and discover a drug to produce the opposite effect? It could be of immense benefit to many couples - especially in these days when we all have so little time - if they had access to something that might speed up the female response. would certainly beat the Squeeze Technique.

Yes, it's nannyish, but remember what we said about seat belts



STEVE **CRAWSHAW** BANNING THINGS

The list already gives the impression of being endless. And still, it gets longer. Ban follows ban - and the protests get louder. Preposterous, absurd, surreal. The words of condemnation for the new culture of interference come pouring out, day after day.

The latest proposal - that video games should carry a warning of the dangers of reckless driving - comes hard on the heels of a host of other equally pernickety rules, each of which seems more startling than the last. We are about to see the death of the T-bone steak (because of of the alleged risk of the human disease CJD), the death of the doorstep (bad for the disabled), and the end of tobacco advertising as we know it. After last week's T-bone ruling, this week it seems that some cuts of lamb are next in line for the (proverbial) chop.

Things have got so bad that William Hill bookmakers say they are "tempted" by the idea of offering odds on what han might come next. The next target might be unpasteurised milk (which is already hanned in Scotland). There is even a lurking threat against some exotic fruit, hecause of the risk that they may hring tropical diseases into the country.

The response to all this rule-making has been high indignation. In the words of John Casey, a fellow of Caius College, Cambridge, writing in the Evening Standard this week: "The nanny state continues its advance in sevenhand-knitted league, jackboots." John Adams, professor of geography at University College, London and author of a book on risk, helieves that we have reached an absurd stage, if the individual's freedom is so severely restricted. "If you're going to criminalise health risks, where on earth do you stop? The sale of tobacco, the sale of alcohol

- the eating of cream huns?" When it comes to beef on the bone, many in this country clearly share Professor Adams'

view. On hearing the announcement that Thone steaks would soon be a thing of the past, Britons rushed out to huy them while the going was still good. "While stocks last" seemed almost to he a selling point. British meat producers yesterday announced a challenge to "taste the difference" between and honeless joints and meat cooked on the bone - the po-

Many argue that the question of risk is a matter for the individual - at least as long as the individual is properly informed. None the less, that argument has been heard on different-occasions over the years; it has rarely seemed

litically correct and the illicit

charmer of the meat-eater's

world respectively.

relevant, in hindsight. When seathelts were made compulsory in 1983, opponents of the legislation insisted that this was an unacceptable violation of individual rights. They wanted the right to be thrown through a windscreen, and (allegedly) survive. The same argument was heard over crash belmets. People insisted that they should not have to wear crash helmets if they did not want to. A tiny minority still hold that view. But the great majority have long since accepted that the inconvenience is small, by comparison with the potential henefit to all.

Only 10 years ago, drinkdriving was considered social-

against it were seen by many as intrusive. But that, too, has changed. People accept the law as entirely natural. The freedom to drink and drive is considered no more desirable than the freedom to kill one's neighbour.

ally) like to eat beef on the bone. I would like, too, to be allowed to eat unpasteurised cheese, in full knowledge of the risks. Governments may sometimes be inclined to wish to impose a han too far. But is that really worse than all the occasions when government has imposed a ban too few?

to call for bans, at the drop of which have vested interests in risks not heing fully discussed are more powerful still. After all, the risks of asbestos and the risks of Thalidomide were not addressed until it was far too late - partly because powerful lobbies conspired to keep things that way.

government was determined just a few years ago to show that the worries about mad cow disease in meat were just down to a few irretevant whingers. The political and economic knock-on effect of any han would clearly be painful; ergo, a han was out of the question. It was an absurd logic. The famous burger-feeding session by John Gummer to his daughter Cordelia was down to a deter-

way. In retrospect (but not just in retrospect) it was woefully wrong to do so. If the present government

I admit: I would (occasion-

Pressure groups are ready a hat. But commercial groups time, does it come to seem a mal? ·

More recently, the British

ly acceptable, and the laws mination to look the other times, the rules - exactly how

has gone too far the other way, we should not jump too quickly to condemnation. The ban on handguns may appear to have been just an emouonal (read "immature") reaction to the slaughter at Dunhlane. But it seems unlikely that any future government will wish to reverse the strict new gun-law legislation, any more than any government would seek to overturn the laws on child labour or on environmental protection. That must be the most important test of whether legislation is sane or insane: in hizarre aberration, or does it come to seem perfectly nor-

We now take health warnings on cigarettes for granted - smokers and non-smokers alike would he startled if the warnings were absent. As for the latest ruling, that new houses should be huilt without doorsteps, thus making access easier for the disabled - what on earth, one might ask, is all the fuss about? Planning laws easier and safer for all. Some-

steep stairs are allowed to be, how the railings should be designed - may seem pointless. But pointless rules eventually fall by the wayside. Hundreds and thousands of sensible rules remain - for our collective

We sometimes like to boast, with teenage hravado, that we understand everything well enough by ourselves. We're grown ups who don't need anybody to tell us what to do. The law-makers come to seem like an irritating Big Brother. In reality, the "default" setting is more often to do nothing because we understand nothing. Mr Gummer's grisly photo-opportunity with Cordelia was the clearest illustration of complacent ignorance that one could ask for.

The new Freedom of Information Act will at least reduce the chances of such a disastrous rerun of the BSE catastrophe, where the Government made a speciality of being economical with the truth. If we know what is happening, then we will already be hetter equipped to deal with the risks. Protests at new legislation are intended to be libhave long sought to make life ertarian; they are in danger of merely sounding petulant.

Marginalised masses, can it be that your time has come?



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TREVOR **PHILLIPS** SOCIAL EXCLUSION

They Blair may not think of bimself as more radical than Ken Livingstone, but on Monday he opened a political Pandors's box that dwarfs the revisioner benefits. The name "Social Exclusion Unit" suggests that the dozen or so civil Servants involved will now concontrate their attention on enspring that upper-crust dinner parties have the requisite quota of black single mothers.

I'm all for that. It would certainly be pleasingly annoying to some people. But it is a policy to becamed out by a social secrelary, not a Secretary of State. Flores the banch of the unit Special chance for a genuine revelends, beside which the demand in retain all lone parent

thing. You would expect the dangerous lefties to be focused on the former, yet the left seems to have forgotten the point of being left-wing. The revolt on benefits for lone parents was never going to achieve fundamental change.
It was bound to fail, since the

Tories had made it clear that they would back the Government. Have Ken and Co forgotten the words of General Giap, the great tactician who won the Vietnam war? "Fight to win; fight only if victory is certain." The upshot of this week's exercise looks like being a Government victory, followed by a period of savage revenge against the rebels. In exchange for what? Two days' headlines.

But the Government could have done better. Work is preferable to benefit; but it looks careless to devise a system by which women risk losing benefit if they do work, and then, through no fault of their own, lose their jobs.

It also seems overly harsh to turn down an exemption for the parents of under-fives. Do we really want to compel mothers to work in those first, vital years? Close parental attenuon may well be the only way to hreak the tragic cycle of underachievement that is the true mark of the underclass, and which ends up costing the rest might expect: it was young.

henefits is a timid, Menshevik of us hillions in remedial educ- employed women in the C2 senior ranks of the Civil Service granted, because they are frail ation, crime control and further welfare henefits.

All that said, if the level of amhition of the most radical Labour MPs is to safeguard a tenner a week for a relatively small number of families, then the ruling classes have little to worry about. If I were an aristocrat or a powerful plutocrat, I would be happily sipping my favourite tipple and reflecting on what a jolly good thing this socialism lark can be, when practised properly.

I might, however, be kept awake at nights if the Social Exclusion Unit turned out to be a lively infant. There could he a truly revolutionary agenda for the unit. But first, we need to understand what is meant by social exclusion. For this is not solely about poverty, or even about race; it is about power.

What people are being excluded from is the ability to take decisions about their own lives. Poverty certainly can produce that result - but is not the only path to alienation. In modern Britain, it isn't even the most common route. Take, for example, the result of some work carried out by (mevitably) the think-tank Demos last year. It showed that the most alienated and powerless group of people in our society was not young. hlack, unemployed men, as you

economic bracket.

When you translate that

into secretaries, typists and receptionisis, you begin to see why. These young women hear all the time that they are the coming thing, yet their working lives are ruled entirely by the whims of their bosses: there's not a lot of Girl Power in the average workplace. At home their lives are constrained by the demands of their male partners, by their children, and, increasingly, by the needs of their ageing parents. In all sorts of ways, they are socially excluded. No amount of money available from the state could empower them individually. These people don't need redistribution of wealth. What they need is a workplace that gives them freedom to take initiatives and to use their talents.

Then there is exclusion driven by snohbery and tradition. We all know that there are clubs which we cannot join: some of them literally are clubs. to which women are not admitted. But, more broadly, there are networks, to which most of us could not gain admission no matter how much money we had, and no matter how brilliant we were - that is. assuming we even knew they existed.

The unit might, for example, consider the extent to which the

are dominated by Oxbridge graduates; there would he a hasis for the PM to force mandarins to search more widely for its new mandarins. We might say the same for the clubs of public schoolboys who run our armed forces, or the political parties that exert a stranglehold on our local democracy.

Think, too, of the millions who are excluded by thoughtless bureaucracy or prejudice. Most of us now take for granted that you can get cash out of a hole in the wall, or that you can pay hills by cheque: increasingly. both private and public sector take it for granted that customers have hank accounts. and privilege them for using their accounts - discounts for direct dehit, for example. But what if you can't get a hank account? You may have had a prison sentence; or you may not, in these days of portfolio working be able to show six months' regular income. Everyday tasks become more difficult; you are greeted by suspicion. and you can be crippled by your

Then there is fear; how can an elderly person trapped in his home play a part in our society? Many of these people are by no means poverty-stricken; but they are cut out of the social involvement most of us take for

inability to use any money you

do earn. That's social exclusion.

and scared. That's social exclusion. They don't need more money; they need families or caring neighbours, It prohably needs volunteers, not cash. Similarly, those who cannot read properly are left outside the loop. That's social exclusion, often caused by had teaching.

The question for the Prime Minister is whether he and his unit can see beyond the many demands for dosh that are no doubt already landing on the mat. One good sign is that the unit has no money of its own; a budget would merely encourage officials to find ways of spending it. Instead they need to find better ways of spending the money that is already in ministers' hands.

Mr Blair is severely disabled in appreciating the extent of the task; be was born with talent and material advantage, and he is a white, male professional; there is nothing in his make-up that allows him to know what it feels like to be an outsider, and certainly it is some time since he will have felt powerless. We will know whether he is a great politician or just a nice one, if his genuine empathy for the excluded goes beyond the hand-outs for the poor, and if he finds a way to smash down the closed circles of power that dominate our



FINANCIAL JOURNAL OF THE YEAR

South West Water piles into landfill business

South West Water yesterday became the country's largest waste disposal group when it bought Terry Adams, an Exeter-based landfill operator, for a maximum sum of £105m. Peter Thal Larsen explains how the utility plans to make brass from muck.

The water utility will initially pay £77m for Terry Adams, which operates 12 landfill sites in Somerset, Manchester and Derbyshire. A further £28m payment depends on the group receiving planning permission for another five sites.

The company's founder and managing director - also called Terry Adams - and his family stand to make £95m if the full amount is paid. Although South West Water executives will run the enlarged husiness. Mr Adams will carry on in an advisory role

Terry Adams currently has spare space for 49m cubic metres of landfill, but has planning permission for just 17m cubic me-



The new landfill sites complement South West Water's existing landfills, which are mostly in East Anglia and along the South Coast

The growing Asian debt burden

tres. If South West Water gets planning approval for all its void space it will overtake Shanks & McEwan, currently the country's

largest landfill operator. Analysts said the price South West Water paid for the space looked cheap when compared with recent deals in the industry. However, South West Water's shares closed down 1p at 929p as investors concluded that the group was now less likely to mount a share buyback.

The company said that uncertainty over the forthcoming regulatory review of the industry would limit its ability to gear up its balance sheet. "We are keeping our powder dry." said Colin Drummond, managing director of South West Water's enterprise division. Analysts believe the company will not buy back shares while the review is going on, suggesting the group will not make a move before 1999 at the earliest.

The new landfill sites complement South

Total external debt, £bn

West Water's existing landfills, which are mostly in East Anglia and along the South Coast. All these regions are expected to experience a shortage of landfill space in future.

South West Water is likely to raise Terry Adams' prices. "In our view the price Terry Adams charges per tonne of waste, in areas where demand is strong, is rather low," said Mr Drummond. He said Terry Adams would also benefit from South West's ability to win planning applications. The group has won

four of the last five applications it has submitted.

An added advantage is that Terry Adams's landfills only accept active waste like domestic rubbish. They enjoy better margins than sites which accept so-called inert waste such as huilding rubble.

Mr Drummond said the introduction of the government's landfill tax had not affected demand for active waste landfill - which is largely supplied by local authorities - de-

spite a doubling in charges. In contrast, denand for inert landfill has fallen sharply as a result of the tax.

Mr Drummond said the acquisition was part of South West Water's strategy of building up its profits from unregulated activities. In the year to last March the divisions which fall outside the industry regulator's control made operating profits of £12.9m, compared to a £111.7m contribution from the regulated Water & Sewage business.

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Seoul plunges to ten-year low as confidence ebbs

The Asian financial crisis deepened yesterday as the South Korean and Indonesian currencies and stock markets suffered another major fall. As Stephen Vines reports from Hong Kong, the scale of the problem has raised concern among European experts while the rescue package for South Korea is generating opposition.

The South Korean stock market shuddered down to a 10year low as blue chips plunged by 7 per cent and the local currency, the won, lost yet another 10 per cent of its value in early

The country opened its bond market to greater foreign investment, the day before rules for foreign ownership of listed companies were relaxed. These measures have long been urged on the Korean government hut when they were implemented, foreign buyers resolutely shied away and their introduction was lost during another punishing day on Seoul's financial markets.

Poking its finger in the gaping hole caused by an almost total lack of confidence in the government's fiscal policy, the central hank went back on its pledge not to try to stabilise the won by intervening in foreign exchange markets and made a costly foray yesterday, costing an estimated \$200m, in an attempt to stop the won going into total free fall. On Thursday the government admitted that it only bad \$10bn left in foreign exchange reserves, so it could ill afford the extravagance of intervening in the market.

The situation in Korea is now so bad that practically every action taken by the government is almost immediately undermined by fresh news of disaster. Yesterday it announced that the Monetary Board would extend loans of \$6.45bn to banks, merchant banks, investment trust companies and securities firms.

Hours before the announcement it was clear that it had come too late to rescue Korea's fourth largest securities house Dongsuh Securities, part of the Kukdong Group, the country's 31st largest conglomerate. The failure of Dongsuh followed last weekend's announcement that Coryo Securities was also going out of husiness.

Doubts about the ailing government's ability to bandle the crisis have been exacerbated by the slow arrival of funds from

the \$57bn International Monetary Fund (IMF) rescue package. In addition, there is growing feeling that, although this is the largest rescue package in history, it will not he sufficient to hail out the Korean

While Koreans contemplate these problems, demonstrators were out on the streets of Seoul protesting against the tough terms extracted by the IMF. These demonstrations reilect a growing mood in the region where the IMF conditions for rescuing East Asian economies are coming under increasingly critical scrutiny.

Newspapers across the region are running a slew of articles by academics, husinessmen and others questioning whether the IMF's insistence on tight monetary policy is really the best way of curing the Asian patients. They argue that the underlying economic strength of the region will be undermined by the lack of availability of funds for

investment. Thailand, Indonesia and South Korea bave had to resort to IMF rescues in past months, and the Philippines is yet to emerge from an earlier IMF rescue. The region's most vocal critic of the IMF is the Malaysian Prime Minister, Mahathir Mohamad, who believes that it is using its financial

muscle to allow Western institutions into previously protected developing markets to huy cut price assets.

Meanwhile in Indonesia. where the IMF rescue has yet to restore confidence, the markets reacted with alarm yesterday when it was announced that ill health would prevent President Suharto from attending a regional beads of state meeting this weekend.

Mirroring the falls in Seoul, the local currency lost 10 per cent of its value and share prices sank by over 7 per cent. This brings the stockmarket down to 1993 levels and gave the currency its higgest one day fall against dollar. The rupiah bas lost around a quarter of its value since the IMF was called in at the beginning of October and has balved in value over the past year.

Most other Asian markets were down yesterday hut Hong Kong again showed its ability to surprise with the stockmarket managing a near 2 per cent rise, after the previous day's fall of 5.5 per cent. Trying to make sense of this kind of volatility will inevitability lead to frustration.

Asia's financial crisis was expected to cut European Union growth by as much as half a percentage point and lead central banks to pursue a more benign rate policy. Concerns in Europe were focused primarily on South Korea and the knock-on effects the financial panic there

will have on other countries in

Amid a less robust growth outlook, analysts expected Eushy away from tightening policy aggressively. Most now reckon that a rise in short-term German interest rates will come about some time in the first or second quarter of 1998.

Most economists said the slower pace of EU growth represented a "best case" scenario. one that assumed a timely resolution to Asia's difficulties and avoided a more dire and glob-

al systemic problem. Should the situation worsen beyond expectations, however, it is anyone's guess how events might unfold. The most frightening scenario is a situation in which an Asian country failed to honour its debt - a fear that is beating up in South Korea as it struggles to secure additional outside funding.

Meanwhile, analysts said

Safeway prepares for bid from

Asda

Safeway was on bid alert last night as speculation persisted that the rival supermarkets group Asda was considering

launching a hostile agreement had been reached takeover. A merger of the two companies would create Britain's biggest

the region, particularly Japan. Michael Harrison reports. Rumours swept the market yes-

ropean monetary authorities to terday that Asda was raising a large amount of bank debt in readiness to strike for Safeway. An Asda spokeswoman categorically denied that the group was putting together a deht facility. But Safeway and its financial advisers were still said to be ready to mount a vigorous bid defence.

Talks about a £9bn merger of the two companies collapsed in September after news of the discussions leaked and it became apparent that any deal would almost certainly have been referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

A merger between the two would create a supermarket giant with 15.3 per cent of the UK's £85bn-a-year food retailing market, 600 stores and 125,000 employees, outstripping Tesco and Sainsbury in size.

At the time of the abortive merger talks, Safeway said a combination of the two groups would produce savings of about £200m a year through the combination of purchasing, information technology and marketing hudgets. There would also be in the region of 1,000 to

The rationale behind the merger would be to create a third force in the UK supermarket capahle of taking on the two market leaders, particularly in the South-east, where Tesco controls 70 per cent of the superstore market. Asda has an amhitious pounds 260m plan to double its chain of hypermarkets with 13 new openings by 1999.

However, a hostile bid would of the South Korean govern- still be fraught with complica-The real doubts, bowever, ment's attitude to the crisis. An tions. Archie Norman, the Asda chairman, is deputy chairman of the Conservative party. The ditions. Apart from the seen any sign from the Korean President of the Board of Trade Margaret Beckett has gained a reputation for blocking mergers which reduce competition and is thought almost certain to refer any Asda-Safeway deal to the

merger talks Safeway has slipped in value from £4.3bn to £3.7bn while Asda's stock market capitalisation has grown from

Power chiefs summoned for coal talks

The heads of Britain's biggest power generators and Richard Budge of RJB Mining have been summoned to a meeting with the Paymaster General Geoffrey Robinson on Monday to thrasb out a deal to keep the pits open.

All three coal-fired genera-tors - National Power, Power-Gen and Eastern - will attend the meeting at the Treasury, which is scheduled to start midafternoon and continue until an

agreement has been struck. The meeting follows the confusion which surrounded Tony Blair's Commons announcement last week that an

between the generators and that Mr Budge that would keep all RJB's pits open until next June. Despite the Prime Minister's statement, it quickly emerged that no agreement bad been reached and that none of the generators bad signed up to take more coal supplies from RJB.

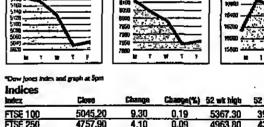
Mr Robinson has been trying to broker a deal for the past fortnight to avoid the political embarrassment of beavy job losses being announced in the coal industry in the run-up to Christmas.

It is feared that balf of RJB's 17 deep mines could close with 5,000 joh losses.

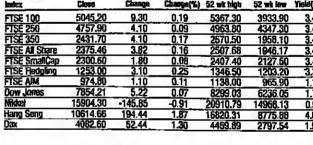
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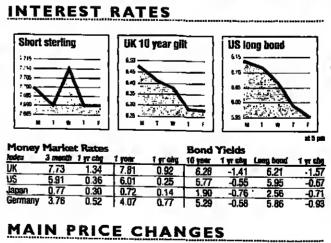
STOCK MARKETS

FTSE 100



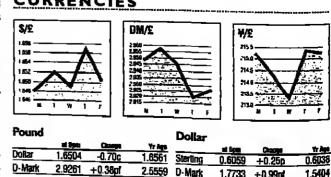
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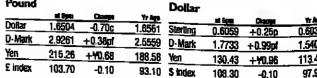




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Brent Oil (S)	16.99	0.12	22.42	GOP	113.90	3.80	109.7	Jar
Gold (S)	282.55	-1.80	368.85	RPI	159.60		153.91	
Silver (\$)	5.79	-0.27		Base F		7.25	6.00	100
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Cavalry is on the way, but it may be too late

The announcement of the International Monetary Fund's massive rescue package for South Korea has failed dismally to stabilise the country's financial markets. Diane Coyle, Economics Editor, asks whether the IMF cavalry will win in the end.

Two things have made the financial markets doubtful about emergency credit arranged for the next two weeks. South Korea will be enough to hring the crisis to an end. One debts the loan has to cover. The takes that got it into such a mess in the first place.

South Korea's short-term overseas debts are now put at \$100bn, the hulk of its total

Korea's top conglomorates

	Number of additioles	Paid in capital bn woo (£bo)	Total Habilities bu woo (£bn)	Debt/equity ratio %
Hyundai	57	3,599 (1.27)	42,974 (14.90)	. 437
Samsung	80	3,772 (1.31)	36,897 (12.79)	267
LG	· 49	3,029 (1.05)	28,768 (9.97)	347
Daewoo	30	3,850 (1.33)	26,449 (9.17)	340
Sunkyong	46	1,100 _ (0.38)	18,042 (6.26)	384

The IMF itself is putting forward \$21bn in credit, \$5.56bn is the scale of the overseas of which it has already lent, with another \$5.58bn available by 8 other is whether Seoul is will- January. If this turns out not to ing to correct the policy mis- be enough to stabilise the currency, the World Bank will chip in with \$10bn, Japan \$10bn, the US \$5bn and the Asian Devel-

opment Bank \$4bn. Amongst six smaller lenders. flects lending between branch- available \$1.25hn if necessary companies, some \$40hn is land. The international offi-

whether the \$57bn (£34.5bn) thought to need refinancing in cials who negotiated this package, the biggest emergency financing arrangement of its kind yet, believe that it is hig enough - provided Seoul adheres to the conditions set down by the IMF. Indeed, they expect that none of the loans apart from the government budgets - the IMF IMF contribution will actually need to be drawn

Financial analysts are less convinced. Lim Chang Yuel, South Korea's finance minister, debts. Although some of this re- Britain has offered to make admitted the foreign currency reserves bave fallen to just es of Korean banks and via a loan from the Bank of Eng. \$10hn, less than a single and making the jobs market far month's worth of imports. It is more flexible.

not completely clear that the funds are in place to repay all the dehts that will come due in government has said it will guarantee all the corporate

like LG and Hyundai, have debt-equity ratios in the region of 350-450 per cent, according to official statistics. The tighter interest rate policy the IMF has imposed on South Korea will push up the cost of servicing dehts, causing serious cashflow problems

plementation of the IMF conbeing a great believer in the thestructuring the financial sector.

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This is no small programme, and any government would hesitate to embrace these !crms the short term, even though the never mind a new government not involved in negotiating the 1,500 job losses. deal in the first place. Michel Camdessus, the

Even well-known names 1MF's managing director, has amongst the conglomerates, expressed his confidence that Seoul will stick to the deal. Privately, fund officials say the government will have no choice. because otherwise it will not get the emergency loans and would have to default on repayments. Even so, many in the finan-

cial markets are highly critical concern the prospects for im- analyst who did not wish to be named said: "We haven't yet standard fund medicine of rais- authorities that they accept any ing interest rates and slasbing responsibility for the crisis or are willing to take corrective actions." Few expect to get those ory that if it isn't hurting it isn't signs before next week's elecworking these include retion. But South Korea will have MMC. less than a month between then opening the economy to more and the disbursement of the sucforeign trade and investment, ceeding tranche of IMF credit redrawing the corporate sector in the New Year to persuade foreign investors that it is will-

£4.9bn to £5.2bn.

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23/BUSINESS



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In the end, it's the little guy who matters

The Stock Exchange's new orderdriven trading system continues to amaze with its ability to distort share prices and disadvantage small investors. The FTSE 100 index has been yo yoing around all week, erratically and randomly moving this way and that. To the outside observer, there's little way of telling what's real and what isn't. If the exchange cannot provide an ordered and transparent market place for share trading, what purpose does So serious have the problems be-

come that a series of changes have been introduced to prevent the market being distorted on New Year's Eve, traditionally a thin day for trading, but an all important one because the closing index of the year is widely used for valuation purposes by organisations and institutional investors.

The most important of these changes is that for this one day the exchange will suspend the normal rules of the market place and assess the closing index itself, by throwing out prices it regards as anomalous. This is as close to an admission of failure as it is possible to get without being explicit about it. If the closing price of a market is determined not by the market but

by an independent adjudicator, then by definition it is no longer a market. If on the other hand the independent adjudicator's guess at the "real" level of the market is a more reliable one than the trading system generates, then plainly the system has failed.

Technically, Sets has been a great success, baving crashed only once since its launch on 20 October. But practically it has been a disaster, with very little by way of mitigation. It is no wonder many are giving up on the new system (Sets only accounts for 40 per cent of trades in the stocks it covers), preferring instead to deal either directly with market makers or to use the old quote driven system; the prices just aren't reliable.

The main problem is with so called "rogue trades", which generally happen first thing in the morning or at the end of the day when there is not much activity. What activity there is often takes place at unrepresentative prices, which in turn distorts the opening or closing level. As a consequence the FTSE 100 has since the new system was launched been subject to wild gyrations not at all reflective of what is really bappening in the

Sometimes, as appears to have happened a few weeks ago with some late trading in pharmaceutical stocks by JP Morgan, this is done with the deliberate intention of distorting the market, presumably because of a matching futures or options position. But most of the time the distortion is random and of innocent intent. A rogue price is entered, more in hope than anticipation, and some fool picks it up.

Unfortunately, the effect is far from innocent. Many will trust these prices as a basis for making an investment decision. Worse, those who instruct their broker to deal at the best available price (a not unreasonable way of proceeding) could and do find themselves dealing at the rogue prices, since these might be the only ones available at the time.

As always, it is the investors least capable of looking after their own interests - generally small retail investors - that tend to get the most disadvantaged. Without a real handle on what's going on in the market, your chances of losing money are that much higher under the new system than the old. It scarcely needs saying that a market which favours the insider over the outsider is an im-It is hard to know what can be done to solve these problems. So much has been invested in the new system, both in terms of money and ego, that there is no question of abandoning it and going fully back to the old. It is also important to bear in mind that this new trading system is actually what the big users of the stock market - institutional investors - wanted and lobbied for. Without going over to an order driven system, it was often said when the debate was raging, there was a real risk of London losing out to the computer based systems of France and Frankfurt. It was a question of modernise, or die, the Stock Ex-

But was it really right to copy the Continental bourses? The order driven system seems to have worked well in France and Frankfurt, but these are small exchanges by comparison with London, and the degree to which they need to cater for the retail investor is smaller still. Big institutional investors can usually look after their own interests. For some of them, it is questionable that they need an exchange at all. The new system is being used by many as just a sounding board for a growing level of offmarket trading. That in turn perfect and potentially corrupt one. is squeezing another category of share trader, the agency broker.

change executive would insist.

Curiously, the market which the Stock Exchange's old quote driven system bears most resemblance to is Nasdaq, "the market for the 21st century", as it calls itself in its TV advertisements. How odd that a system the stock exchange seems to regard as old fashioned and out of date is the one that attracts the world's best high technology growth stocks and is the most important rival in the US to the New York stock exchange. How odd too that Nasdaq specifically targets the retail investor as the one it is in business to serve. Somewhere along the line, our own Stock Exchange seems to have

For those of us who believe in the free market, the most satisfying thing about the crisis in Korea and elsewhere in the Pacific Rim is the way it has vindicated the short termist, non interventionist approach of Wall Street and the City. For many years now, it has been fashionable to look longingly at the example of Japan, her clones in the Far East, and other examples of communitarian capitalism and ask, "why don't we do it like that"?

The answer is now apparent; the long term relationships built up in these economies between bankers,

ments, far from yielding a competitive advantage, has actually led to some extremely poor investment decisions, to a molly coddling of unnecessary and uneconomic

companies and projects. So concentrated on the long term have some of these countries become that they seem to have lost all sight of the need for short term profit and plain good housekeeping. These very close between partnerships between industry, finance and government, seem to have resulted less in the long term good and more, as we now know, in uncommercial favouritism and misallocation of capital. Our own arms length, Angio Saxon capitalist ways may have their drawbacks, but at least we don't build uneconomic car plants (unless we are bribing the Japanese and the Koreans to do it for us, ofcourse, with large amounts of state aid).

The lesson for Tony Blair and New Labour of what's happened in the Far East is an uncomfortable one - that there may be no middle way between the American model with its often brutal social consequences. and old style socialist ideals. Certainly we are unlikely to be hearing for some time of the role model attributes of Asia.

Burton forms home shopping joint venture with Littlewoods

Burton Group and Littlewoods, two of the best known names in British retailing, are linking up to launch a new, mega mail-order company. The venture marks a new aggressive mood at Littlewoods and is further evidence of the convergence between home shopping and the high street.

The new company will contain all of Burton's fashion multiples home shopping businesses, including Dorothy Perkins, Racing Green, Top Shop and Hawkshead. Burton will hold a 65 per cent interest with Littlewoods, the family run mail order to pools company, taking a 35 per cent stake for £15m paid to Burton.

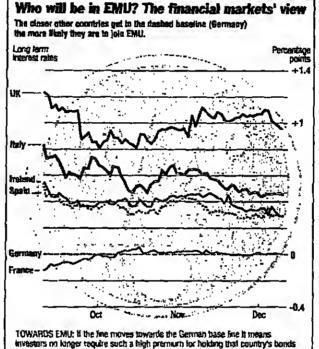
Burton will receive royalties based on sales from the new venture as well as its share of profits. Although the new venture will be managed by Burton

director Robin Klein, it will be controlled on a 50:50 joint basis. The new company will have access to six million customers. double Burton's current database. In a separate agreement, Littlewoods will feature all of Burton's fashion brands on around 30 pages of its established bome shopping catalogues. Barry Gibson, Littlewoods new chief executive, said the deal marked a change to a more "outward looking culture," at the company. James Ross, Littlewoods' chairman, said the Burton deal was one of several likely joint ventures. Speaking as Littlewoods announced a 75 per cent jump in half year operating profit to £46m, as strong mail order sales offset a slump in takings from the football pools business, Mr Ross said the company hoped to bid to run the National Lottery as part of a joint venture when the current licence ran out in 2001. "A lot of people have approached us about this. We

from its leisure division 24 per cent down to £8.9m in the balf year to October

Burton said the partnership. which was initiated by Barry Gibson, Littlewoods' new chief executive, would enable it to accelerate the growth of its home shopping business. John Hoerner, Burton's chief executive said: "Our home shopping business is ready to expand. We are now in a position to accelerate this process by utilising Littlewoods extensive expertise and home shopping infrastructure."

James Ross, Littlewood's chairman, denied the deal was a poor substitute for its failure to buy Freemans, the Sears mail order group. Littlewoods was blocked from buying Freeman's by the competition authorities earlier this year. "This deal give us a much lower risk and a shorter payback than Freemans would have," said Mr Ross, "Freemans would have given us scale overnight, but it would have tied up our management time." The bid for Freemans cost the company £4m, however that was offset by a VAT rebate.



Investors no longer require such a high premum for holding that country's bonds compared to German ones, because they are confident the currency won't devalue against the mark. In other words, they think that country will be locked into

AWAY FROM EMU: However, if they think the country won't be in EMU, that it will have higher whation, and that there is a risk of a future devaluation against the mark, then they will demand an extra premium for holding that country's bonds, so the line will move away from the base.

When will EMU start? The City Analysts' View.

The independent asked analysts from: Nikko Earope, Paina Webber, ARK Amro, JP Moroso, Deptsche Moroso Grentell Salomon Brothers, Goldman Sacks, HSBC James Capel, UBS what probability they placed on EMU starting on time.

shability EMU starts on time	84%	(81% fast week
abability EMU is delayed:	13%	(15% last week
bability EMU never happens	3%	(4% last week)

Summit to give clues on likely head of ECB

The Euro summit, due to finish this evening, may provide clues about the yet-to-be-chosen bead of the European Central Bank (ECB), an issue which could be erucial to EMU's success.

Rita Schuhmacher of Nikko Europe said: "I think it [a signal about the likely ECB head] is more likely than many people expect ... It must be a candidate who has the confidence of the markets".

The markers' favoured candidate is Wim Duisenberg, the Bundesbank-backed Dutchman. Micbael Lewis of Deutsche Morgan Grenfell remarked: "The markets are quite nervous that some political deal could be done over the

head of the ECB. Markets really don't like politicians interfering with central banks, as politicians typically try and engineer weaker currencies". There has been speculation that the French could withdraw the candidature of Jean-Claude Trichet, governor of the Bank

of France, in return for certain

concessions, such as a French-

approved head of the European

Bank for Reconstruction and

Development. Lea Paterson

of the UK investment banking

Committee appointment for 'Independent' journalist

Dr Diane Coyle, Economics Editor of The Independent, has been appointed as a member of the Statistics Advisory Committee. She joins a group of 18 existing advisers on the committee. The committee includes both data users and data providers, drawn from business, the media, the academic world, and from government departments and other public bodies. The Statistics Advisory Committee was established in April 1996 when the Office for National Statistics (ONS) was created. It plays a key role in the governance of official statistics. It offers authoritative and independent advice to the Director of ONS, Tim Holt, on the statistical work of the Office, on annual corporate targets and on his responsibilities as Head of the Government Statistical Service.

Buoyant debut for Marchpole

Marchpole Holdings, which designs, sources and distributes menswear and boyswear under licence from Yves Saint Laurent Couture SA, celebrated its first day on the stock market with the news that it has been awarded a licence to supply YSL casualwear to an existing YSL licensee in Japan. Under the terms of the five-year licence, Marchpole will supply its casualwear ranges to guaranteed minimum purchase volumes and all royalties will be paid by the existing Japanese licensee. Marchpole's only investment is in the advertising and marketing of the product. The group's shares reached 123.5p each by the close of trade, up 13.5p - or 12 per cent on the 110p share placing price.

Explosive sale for ICI

IC1 is selling its 51 per cent stake in South African-based explosives business AECI to joint venture partner for \$117m in casb. The sale is the latest in a series of casb divestments as ICI focuses more closely on specialty chemicals, coatings and materials sectors of the chemical industry. The deal would be broadly earnings neutral and the proceeds would be used to cut debt, ICI said. AEL's sales in 1996 were \$221m and trading profits were \$32m. The business had net assets of \$54m at the end of 1996 and employed around 3,800 people.

Drew baffled by share price fall

Drew Scientific Group yesterday said it knew of no reason why its share price bas fallen, adding that "the group's new products offer significant competitive advantages in their respective market sectors". Shares have fallen 37 per cent since June. After the statement they rose to end the day at 90p, up 7p. The Cumbria company has developed systems to test for diabetes and beart disease, taking advantage of national campaigns aimed at more early diagnosis of the conditions On 17 November Drew reported an interim loss of £150,000, up from a loss of £62,000 pounds in the same period last year. Drew's beart disease test has benefited from a new trend for more health screening in doctor's surgeries rather than in hospitals, analysts said. The company said the test has received "a large amount of interest" from potential buyers.

European commissioner attacks BSkyB alliance with BT

The European Commission has bit out at two alliances between media companies which could cause "serious" concern.

It said yesterday that it had "serious doubts" about the £18bn merger of the publishers Reed Elsevier and Wolters Kluwer and had decided to open an in-depth investigation into the deal. In a statement, the EC said there were "very significant overlaps between the activities of both parties in several areas (for example in the areas of legal and tax publishing), where the position of to be concerned by the aneither one or both of the parties seems already strong at the moment". The EC has four months to announce a final decision on the deal.

are looking at bidding to run the

Lottery." Intense competition

from the new mid-week Lottery

left Littlewoods' trading profits

Mark Armour, chief financial officer of Reed, said yesterday: "It's premature to speculate where the European Commission will focus particularly. There will be an enormous amount of communication between us and the EC over the coming months."

The market did not appear

nouncement, and Reed shares closed up 19p to 619p. Analysts said it was possible the EC could ask Reed and Wolters to make some disposals in order to

get clearance for the deal. in a separate move. Karel Van Miert, the European competition commissioner, attacked BSkyB's alliance with BT, saying "it risks creating a monopoly". The pair are partners in British Interactive Broadcasting (BIB), which is also backed by Matsushita Electric and Midland

Bank, BSkyB's shares dropped 13p to 428p on the news. The EC is presently investigating BIB. which is to provide interactive services for digital television.

Mr Van Miert said the anticipation of a European single currency was the catalyst for an explosion in the number of mergers. He added that the EC would have been notified of around 150 mergers and takeovers by the end of 1447, an increase of 15 per cent on the previous year.

438 450 45 458

Source. Bloomberg

ABN Amro set to pay £65m for BZW Australasia

ABN Amro, the Dutch bank, will next week announce the purchase of BZW Australasia. an investment banking business owned by Barclays Bank, according to banking sources. ABN is expected to pay around

A\$160m (£65m). Barclays first put BZW Australusia up for sale in October, with other parts of BZW, its investment banking arm. Bardays initially intended to sell the husinesses as a package, but no suitable buyer emerged. Parts

operations were sold to Credit Suisse First Boston in November, leaving Barclays to dispose of its Asian and Australasian investment banking husinesses separately. Neither Barclays nor ABN Amro would confirm rumours that they nouncement, though ABN Amro admitted it was talking to Barclays. A Barclays spokesperson said BZW Australasia sale talks were "progressing"

	Sterling			Dollar			D-Mar
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Austria	20560	20530	20463	36580	36503	36383	2053
Belgium	60.308	60:101	59.727 2.3250	14210	14192	14163	0807
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Mar 98	92.36	92.37	9234	21768	_
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Mar-98	95.19	96.19	9615	59013	_
Dec-97	93.92	93.93	\$3.66	15497	_
May-98	94.78	9479	94.78	15221	_
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British Energy turns on the heat



DEREK PAIN

Its been a week to remember stalment has been collected ping spree. Dixons, however, for British Energy, the nuclear making the flotation price the put on 11.5p to 630p. Dresding strong gains with GRE up rent casual wear to a Japanese power group once regarded as equivalent of 203p. the privatisation too far.

On Wednesday it was selected for Footsie member- £3.1hn capitalisation. ship and yesterday the soon-to-merge UBS investment house lifted its target price from 420p to 550p.

Its all a far cry from the summer of last year when the the market is already winding group came to the stock mar- down for the Christmas holiket. It was the most contro- days. Far Eastern worries conversial of the Tory tinued to hover and there was Government's share sales, vague unease about US inter- to 544p by BAT industries and prompting a fierce debate est rates. among the Government's advisers about the level the shares thought to be on a cash raising signalled a 450p target. should be priced. In the end exercise, reawakening expecthe company was offered at a tations it has a major acquisitries was little changed at knock down £1.4bn. And on tion in its sights. Again 928.5p. It is selling a controlthe first day of dealings the attention was directed at Safe-

441.5p high, give the group a £10m to £255m but kept the wich Union dipped 3p to 381p closed at 127.5p from a 105p Energy's latest progress oc- Spencer lost 10.5p to 600p fol- cautious.

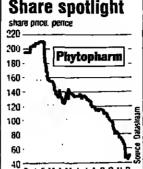
curred as Footsic ended a lowing SBC Warburg sell advice. three day losing run, gaining a modest 9.3 points to 5,045.2 in thin trading. There were signs

Vodafone fell op to 409p. Lehman Brothers edged up its profit expectations and put a 470p 12 month target on the

UBS was thought to he responsible for a 7p progression rail maintenance group Jarvis Asda, firm at 173p, was advanced 12p to 353p as UBS Imperial Chemical Indus-

Financials produced some tract to supply Yves Saint Lau-Kleinwort Benson downgraded 12.25p to 328p and Commer customer. Gooch & Housego, The shares, up 4.5p to a new this year's profit estimate by cial Union 31p to 886p. Nor-making optical components, shares on its buy list. Marks & with Salomon Smith Barney placing and General Indus-

> Three newcomers appeared. Marchpole, placed at 110p, ended at 124.5p, its debut was accompanied by a con-



tries reached 35p from a 25p sale price. Cordiant, the advertising

and marketing group doing the splits, firmed to 110p. Shareholders get one Cordiant Communications share and one Saatchi & Saatchi share for every two Cordiant shares. Dealings start on Monday.

Phytopharm, seeking drugs 7.5p to 53.5p as Nomura took Canadian stake which went a 17.1 per cent stake. The shares came from Ethical Holdings which at one time had run, up 7.75p to 146.75p as take a 28.5 per cent interest. Phy-topharm was floated at 175n a pectations of Bangladesh con-

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90p after the company said it could not explain the recent share weakness and trading was in line with expectations. Farlier this year the shares were above 190p. Shield Diagnostic's en-

couraging progress report and continuing hopes that Abbot, the US group will take a stake. took the price 25p higher to Aminex, the oil and gas group with extensive interests m

the former Soviet Union, was little changed at 59.5p as Credit Suisse First Boston was revealed from herbal remedies, flowered as the buyer of the 4.85 per cent through the market this week. Tullow Oil enjoyed a late

TAKING STOCK

Proteus International rose &p to 48.5p as interest grew in its BSE detection system. An Irish company has successfully completed a field survey of the development which is aimed at diagnosing the disease in hours and could be used in slaughterhouses. The Dublin Government is keen. There are suggestion that if final tests are successful it will make them mandatory and press for adoption across Europe. Like most biotech groups Proteus, with close links to ML Laboratories, has had an erratic ride. It shares nearly hit 400p in 1994.

Tradepoint, the stock market in miniature which was expected to boom with the advent of order driven trading, fell 7.5p to 65p. The shares touched 148.5p

price with the partly paid down to 94p.	e way, little changed at 344p. plosives operation: Merrill	topharm was floated at 175pa share in April last year. The shares hit 210p early this year. Drew Scientific rose 7p to	to 718p as slumping metal Tradepoint benefited from a	
CIS 465 Loopold 63.00	\$\text{\$\text{\$\frac{9}{2}\text{\$\text{\$\text{\$\frac{9}{2}\$\text{\$\tex{	Second Patrice Seco	divided by lax year's earnings per share, eachding enterordinary terms but including enterportum. Other detailer Ex rights x Ex-dividend: a Ex-alt: a Suspended: p Partly Pald; np Ni Pald; AMM. Other detailer Ex rights x Ex-dividend: a Ex-alt: a Suspended: p Partly Pald; np Ni Pald; a AMM. Other detailer Ex rights x Ex-dividend: a Ex-alt: a Suspended: p Partly Pald; np Ni Pald; a Pald; a Pald; a Pald; np Ni Pal	e?
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25/BUSINESS

Russia holds pot of gold for those who fire the state of risk assault course

See and presented the More than 400 British companies have decided that the benefits of investing the new Russia outweigh the risks. Phil Reeves reports from Moscow on why the former Soviet Union holds Eastern promise for UK investors.

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 $(S_{m,n}) =_{m+1} (2 \cdot 3 m^m n)$

It is one of those announcements that sounds like a future Trivial Pursuit question, a tiny punctuation mark in history which we will one day look back on with damp-eyed affection. More than 30 years after first securing fridge space in swinging Britain, Tupperware has finally arrived in Russia.

The multinational is launching operations in St Petersburg with unabashed optimism. "The Tupperware career and earnings opportunity are being well received," boasted its chief executive, Rick Goings in his best business-speak.

His company is entering one of the toughest beats on the planet. On the one hand, there is the endemic corruption, bureaucracy, legislative chaos and (for some) the nightmare of distributing over a sparsely populated country that stretches across 11 time zones. On the other, there are 147 million new consumers, low labour costs, a highly educated population, and a large economy founded on vast natural resources.

So far, some 400 British companies have pondered this equation and concluded that

 particularly in oil and gas. BP and Royal Dutch/Shell this month agreed to spend about \$4bn in Russia's under-financed oil sector, eclipsing all previous investments.

This is not to say that today's investors and businesses have no serious worries. A government corruption scandal has greatly weakened the Russian's government's team of pro-western economists led by Anatoly Chubais, and will slow down reforms. And a battle is looming over the stability of the rouble; the crisis on the world markets, which has prompted an exodus of \$5bn of foreign money from the domestic T-bill market. To defend the currency, the Russian Central Bank is preparing to draw on it \$21.5bn reserves.

Yet businesses have seen worse threats come and go. In the three years since Smithkline Beecham has been in Russia, its sales have risen 800 per cent.

The Anglo-American health care company will this year sell something close to \$100m worth of cosmetics and pharmaceutical products into Russia which are imported from its western European plants. It knows the "headline" problems - the demands for protection money, the 500 annual contract killings, the stories about conmen dressing up as customs officers and taking delivery of lorryloads of produce.

But the first two of these blights affect Russians far more than established foreign firms, and the last is relatively rare. Far less is said about the daily hurdles that they must overthe benefits outweigh the risks come to trade successfully.

Take, for example, "parallel importing" and "grey customs clearance". When SmithKline Beecham imports a lorryload of toothpaste or headache pills, it pays import duties which are then passed on to the price-tag.

Middle-men have found that they can market the same items cheaper in Russia by buying them from SmithKline Beecham in the West, and importing them independently bribing the customs with a payoff which is much less than the duty. Thus, the company finds itself competing with its own products on Russian soil.

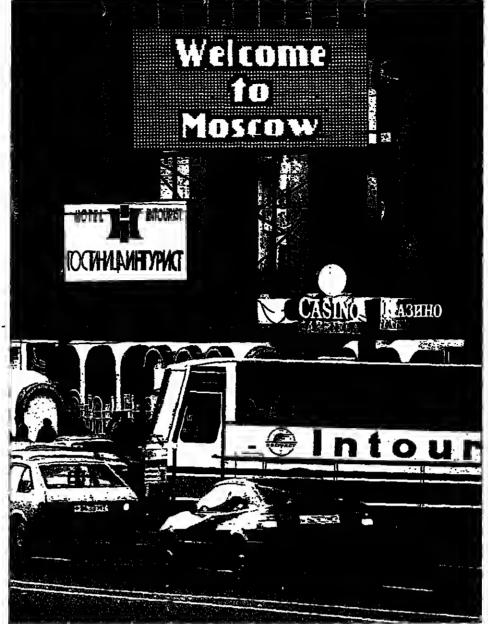
Nor are these the only un-

scrupulous rivals who eat away

at profit margins of western consumer goods manufacturers. The markets of Russia and the former Soviet Union are packed with cheap imitation products produced in India and Turkey, "Look at this," said SmithKline's general manager in the former Soviet Union, Paul Carter, brandishing a Turkish-made toothbrush with the same shape and livery as Aquafresh brush, but with a different name. "I went to an outdoor market in St Petersburg where there were boxes and boxes of these. They were selling five for every one of ours as they were much cheaper."

But for most businesses forgers are overshadowed by another overriding concern. "Ask me what's tough about Russia," said one western executive official, "and I will give you three answers. Tax, tax, and tax."

The chaos after the collapse of Soviet-style central planning spawned a system that is incomprehensible and



Risks and benefits: Western businesses are taking their chance in Russia

hugely abused. Typically, a lawahiding foreign company can expect to have to pay up to 100 of the country's more than 200 different taxes. Just charting a path through the labyrinth of different laws can prove baffling even to the best qualified accountants - and places a befty burden on administrative costs. "There is a huge grey area

where we are just not sure what

the right answer is," complained the same expatriate.

Mistakes can be costly; the tax police have the power to seize assets, freeze bank accounts, and even suspend operating licences if a company fails to settle an alleged tax debt within a mere 10 days. Appealing against their rulings requires a long and costly trek through the courts. The system is also laden

with regulations that are tantamount to taxes on gross revenue rather than profit.

It is into these perilous but profitable waters that Tupperware is now venturing. A pot of gold lies on the horizon, but so do plenty of landmines, Their sales staff may now be preparing for their first Russian Tupperware party, but it is far too soon to celebrate.

Jobs for life are an enduring fact

Jobs last as long on average in the 1990s as they did in the 1970s. New research debunks the myth that the job for life is history. Digne Cayle, Economics Editor, ponders whether this means insecurity really is all in the mind.

The average length of time for which people typically hold a job has scarcely changed over the past 20 years. On average, women stay in the same job for 12 years and men for 18 years.

The averages disguise a wide range of experiences, according to research published yesterday by the Centre for Economic Policy Research. For men, 24 per cent of jobs last more than 30 years, 40 per cent more than 20 years, but 24 per cent less than five years. Among women, 18 per cent stay in jobs for more than 20 years, but 41 per cent for less than five years.

However, these proportions have changed little over the years. Author Simon Burgess, an economist at the University of Bristol, said: "There is no strong tendency for shorter job tenures." His research also established

that people with higher education are more likely to stay in jobs for only a short time. People with a degree are significantly more likely to stay in a job for less than a year and to move frequently.

Women with pre-school children are the other group most likely to have been in a given job for less than 12 months.

A comparison across countries also suggests that jobs in the flexible UK labour market last longer than in Italy. The probability that a 35-year old man working in industry has been in the same job for at least five years is 53 per cent in Britain compared to 49 per cent in Italy.

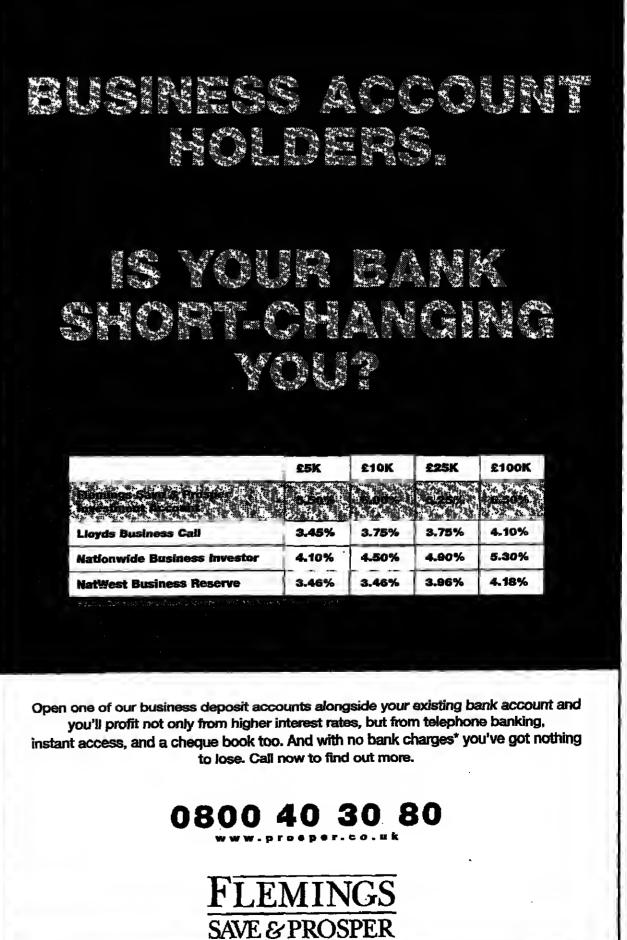
Mr Burgess said: "Fears of a dramatic change in the nature of work, and the emergence of a new industrial peasantry, are overdone."

Similar evidence was used by the Conservative government before the election to claim that job insecurity was all in the mind. However, the new papers concede that insecurity might have other dimensions.

For example, the risk of unemployment has risen since the mid-1970s. Insecurity could also reveal itself in longer working hours, lower pay rises or shorter contracts, even if they are normally renewed.

COMPANY RESULTS								
	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend				
Arton islai (l)	5.08m (0.687m)	1,36m (0.027m)	0.47p (-j	- (-)				
Banett (1)	38.88m (88.25m)	2.68m (1,44m)	1.8p (0.9p)	0.4p (0.3p)				
Beautort Greep (II)	1.84m (1.97m)	0.103m (0.287m)	- (-)	- (-)				
Brasway (I)	20.06m (19.81m)	1,04m (1.38m)	0.89p (1.12p)	0 31p (0.31p)				
Colleges (1)	2.94m (0.779m)	2,785m (2.03m)	4.1p (3.7p)	- (-)				
(Brainger Trust (P)	42.44m (44.60m)	7,023m (6 48m)	19.9p (18.1p)	7.5p (7.0p)				
1.sureace (I)	8.5m (6.8m)	1,28m (0.985m)	13.4p (11.20)	1.9p (1.65p)				
John Suma & Stees (1)	0.843m (0.945m)	0.240m (0.325m)	25p (33.3p)	- (-)				
Trie Holdings (F)	27,0m (39.6m)	2.79m (18.34m)	3.53p (20.73p)	ndi .				
Western Selection (F)	- (+)	0.244m (0.265m)	0.61p (0.93p)	~ {- }				
Windsor (F)	- (-)	2.3m (0.764m)	5.57p (0.62p)	0.6p				
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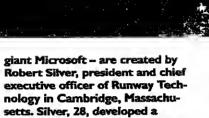
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From little things: techno artist creates ultimate jigsaw





make a different single image visible from a distance, as the details from Flamingo and the bather on

this page show. A number of Sil-

ver's shifting-focus, densely detailed





SIEMENS

Techno-art: Photomosaics - such as

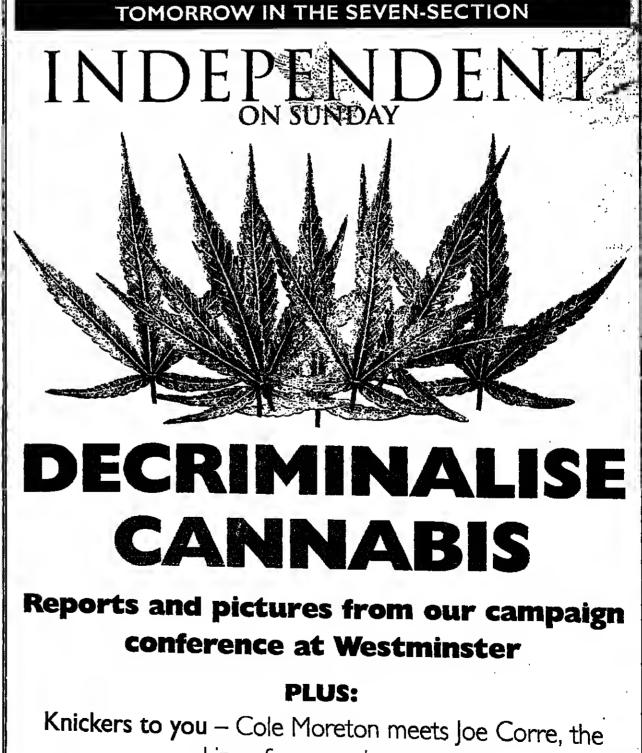
Flamingo (above), Jeune Homme Nu

commissioned portraits of Al Gore,

(below) based on Hippolyte Flan-

drin's Young Man by the Sea and

A cardigan, how lovely, no really, it's just what wanted and paisley as well, how...unique.



king of sexy underwear

South London siren – actress Tara Fitzgerald talks to Jasper Rees about nudity, her accent, and The Woman in White

People of the Year – another chance to cast your votes

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حكنا من الاعل

paradise



e jigsaw

TIME OFF

TRAVEL, LEISURE & SPORT



Maldivian sunset? Few of these islands are more than 2.5 metres above sea level - in 1987 and 1991 storm surges inundated the international airport and a third of the capital, Male

Photograph: Adam Woolfitt/Robert Harding Picture Library

If paradise were half as nice ...

The aquatic beauty of the Maldives has managed to tame the most savage beasts, from sharks to troupes of Italian tourists. But how do local people cope in this idyllic world? Cleo Paskal finds out.

The first thing I saw after putting on my mask and snorkel and diving into the warm, calm, postcard-blue waters was a shark: an enormous one, less than 10 metres away, and swimming towards me.

The grey tinge of underwater light, the bland colourings of the shark and the oval frame of my mask made it all seem like a scene from an old blackand white nature film, the sort with lots of teeth and pieces of ripped flesh. The pounding or my heart supplied the quicketing da-DA, da-DA, da-DA-da-DA-da-DA-da-DA soundtrack.

I was out of the water and collapsed in a panting heap before I'd a chance to get fully wet. Fiuza, a Maldivian friend, looked up lazily from her hammock, strong under a tree at the edge of the beach. "Forget something?"

I should have said: "yes, my samity", or, "my place in the food chain". Instead, I just blabbered: "Sh-sh-shark". She looked faintly curious but not particularly concerned. It was only later that I learned that the unofficial tag

line of the country is: "the Maldives, where even the sharks are friendly". The country is made up of a string of stolls in the Indian Ocean, off the west coast of India. An atoll is one of the most stunning geological formations on the planet, created when an cating volcano collapses in on itself, creating a white sand and green palm needice of low-lying islands around

a poise central lagoon. The whole is protected from big waves by an encircling coral reef.

What that means for swimmers is clear, shallow (therefore warm) waters with easy, protected access to spectacular reefs rife with a dense rainbow of tropical fish. And yes, the sharks are friendly. The Maldives have some of the best snorkelling and diving in the world. Even better, the entire experience is relatively guilt-free. The Mal-

divian government, under the guidance or the award winning cover or mentalist and president of the nation, His Excellency Mr Maumoon Abdul Gavoom. keeps a tight control over the environ-

mental and social impact of tourism. The main way this miracle has been accomplished is by restricting tourists to resort islands. These have to comply with strict environmental controls, which can include asking visitors to take dead batteries home with them.

For the Maldives, environmental and is a matter of immediate survival. Few of its islands are more than 2.5 metres above sea level. Any rise in sea level would sink the country. This isn't doom and gloom science fiction. Storm surges in 1987 and 1991 washed over a central atoll, at one point inundating the international airport and one-third of the capital, Male.

Since then, a massive breakwater has been built around Male. Not only has the breakwater protected the capital from untoward surges, it has also created a rather different sort of place to swim from the hrochure perfection of the less developed islands.

When my pal Fiuza sensed my gihbering, irrational reluctance to get back into the shark- and tourist-infested waters at the resort, she brought me to where the Maldivians go for a dip.

Most of the 200 or so islands of the Maldives are off limits to tourists without special government dispensation. But, as of 1995, one quarter of the country's population of 244,640 live on the highly accessible Male. Roughly: the northern part of the island, where the jettics are, is for tourists. The farther south you go, the more "local" it becomes. The south coast of the island is about as untouristy as the Maldives get. There's a wide, paved road, bordered by a concrete pavement that drops abruptly down to the sea. About 25 metres out is the towering sea wall.

No soft sand besches, no private coves, no glittering tropical fish. But there are, especially when school and work finish, hordes of bobbing, diving and happily squealing Maldivians.

The water between the hreakwater and the pavement wall is calm and shallow, more like a municipal swimming pool than the ocean. And that's the attraction: many Maldivians,

The Maldives is an Islamic country. Bikinis and booze are allowed on the resort islands, but "inhabited" islands, including the capital, insist on a bit more decorum. Women swimmers must wear at least T-shirts and kneelength shorts. Some women go into the water wearing long pants and burkas. That alone would make learning harder, but, also, you can't have male swimming instructors teaching (and possibly touching) female students.

especially the women, can't swim.

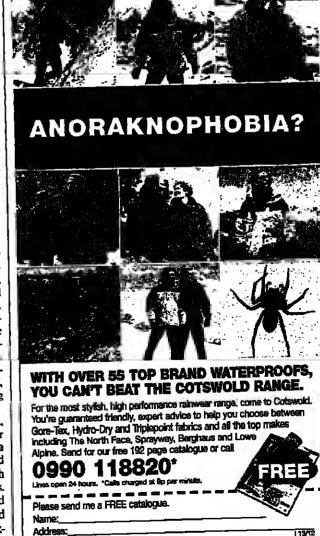
Schools are now starting to teach young girls to swim, but the older ones, including 21-year-old Fiuza, have missed the boat. So my trip to swim by the hreakwater turned into an impromptu swimming lesson. Fiuza brought along her two sisters-in-law and the daughter and niece of a colleague.

As the six of us descended the concrete steps, the women were tentative but excited. Once we were all submerged in the chest high water we stood in a row, holding hands for stability. We ranged in age from 15 to 40, within minutes we were giggling and splashing like children.

They took turns learning to float, and looking through my mask. Other swimmers, amused at the sight of a tourist escaped from a resort, waved and smiled. Teenagers flipped over each other's shoulders and dived for rocks. Jokesters dived underwater and pinched their friends' ankles. Boys raced each other from the wall to the breakwater. It had been years since I'd been surrounded and swept away by the sheer exuberance of playing in the

There were no picture-perfect angel fish or gracefully arcing dolphins, but I learned a new technique for flipping over somebody's shoulder. And there wasn't a shark in sight.

FOOTBALL Happy Hartson/24



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MAKING FOR THE MALDIVES

Most visitors travel to the Maldives on an inclusive package holiday, with operators such as Kuoni (brochure line 07000 458664), Hayes & Jarvis (0181-222 7811) and Airtours (0541 500479). Independent travel is possible, but tricky. Cleo Paskal bought a scheduled Indian Airlines flight from Trivandrum in India to the capital, Male, for around £100 return. There are numerous scheduled flights between the Sri Lankan capital, Colombo, and Male.

Accommodation If you have no pre-booked accommodation, immigration officials may require you to book some upon arrival at the airport before they will formally allow you into the country. The least expensive options at the airport are likely to be in Male.

More information Maldives Today magazine is available free by calling 0181-502 9747. The Ministry of Tourism is at Boduthakurufaanu Magu, Male, Republic of Maldives (00 960 323224, or www.visitmaldives.com).



BRITAIN Bowie's Beckenham/5 A surfer's tale/14

CITY BREAKS Bruges/2

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Pizza and piste

This year the popularity of Italy may have fallen a little, but the advantage is that resorts are trying all the harder to please, writes Cathy Packe.

To compare skiing in Italy with other parts of Europe, you only have to look at a multinational group of skiers coming down a mountain. The Austrians will descend in a series of perfect turns; skiing French-style tends to be more ragged, hut still elegant; the Italians are all over the

place, shonting and having tots of fun. Fun is a good incentive for choosing to ski in Italy, as is the prospect of good food and wine; but it is the weakness of the lire against the pound that accounts for Italy's share of the British ski market. Now, however, other parts of the world have at least as much economic appeal, and Italy is having to try harder.

The Italian ski country straggles in a long ribbon along the horders with France, Switzerland and Austria, and

SKI TIP

To ski faster and accelerate, focus on making a pole plant as you straighten your legs at the start of a turn. To decelerate, plant your pole as you bend your legs at the end of the turn. Chris Exall

provides some of the most varied skiing in Europe. In the Alps are the Val d'Aosta and the Via Lattea, or Milky Way, a vast area whose main resort is Sauze d'Oulx, hut which spreads to the French resort of Montgenèvre. Farther round-mountain run of the Sella Ronda, whose ritziest resort is Cortina

Most of the Italian resorts are reached from Turin, Bergamo, Verona and Venice. The transfer times from airport to resort are worth taking into account if you are thinking of booking a holiday which uses Bergamo; if travelling on to Livigno you have five-and-a-half hours' more travelling time ahead.

The best choice is to be found at First Choice Ski, with 20 resorts, and Crystal, which as well as 16 other destinations offers holidays in Alagna, an hour or so from the Mont Blanc tunnel, and in the villages of Arabba and Corvara in the Sel-

Most operators are extending their number of resorts. Both Thomson and Bardoneccia; Neilson has accommod- 0990 329329

ation for the first time in Bormio and the duty-free resort of Livigno, as well as the smaller resort of Madesimo.

Despite offering a smaller range than some companies, Equity Total Ski does offer small places such as Andalo, only an hour from Verona airport. Equity offers all-in prices for flights, accommodation, ski school, lift passes, hire of equipment and insurance - and anyone taking their own equipment, or deciding against ski school, is offered a reduction.

What you do have to pay with Equity is a supplement for a single room. A company worth considering if you are going alone is Solo's. It offers a limited range of resorts on fixed dates - you are guaranteed to be part of a group of people, though with your own room and no obligation to take part in group activities - but Italy features only in the hrochure aimed at the 50-plus age group.

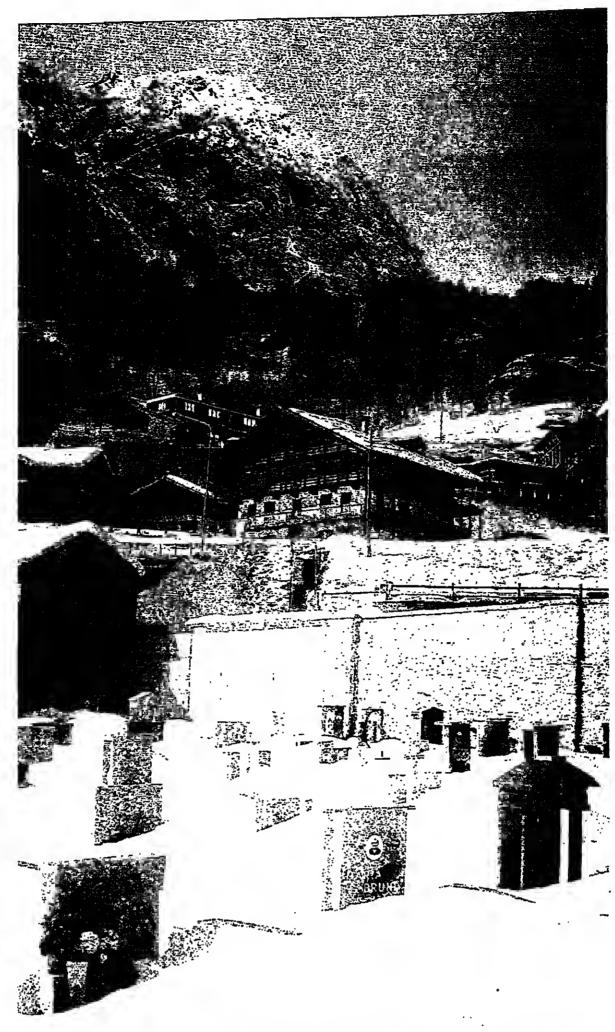
For younger people, Escapades, which is part of Airtours, has a separate brochure - the Wild and Wicked Winter 97/98 Guide - aimed at "bigh-on-life fun-seekers" who don't want to get stuck "playing Scrahhle with Auntie Doreen". Escapades features a much smaller selection of the hotels in the main Airtours brochure, and at the same prices. This could be a warning to anyone who would prefer not to be in a hotel full of "good-time animals"; make sure you look at both brochures.

Italy may not be the first choice for a family holiday, although Courmayeur is recommended by several operators. One of these is Airtours, although curiously their offer of free child places covers only Sauze d'Oulx, Bardonecchia. Santa Caterina and Passo Tonale.

Courmayeur, the otdest of the Italian alpine resorts, developed into an international ski resort when the opening of the Mont Blanc tunnel linked it with Chaeast are the Dolomites and the the monix. It has nearly 70 miles of pistes, down the slopes of Mont Blanc as well as in the main skiing area, the Checrouit. This year brings a new quad lift to take skiers up the Checrouit. There are opportunities for glacier and cross-country skiing, hut Courmayeur is probably best known for guided off-piste skiing.

Of course, by now you may already have this season's skiing sorted out, but a bit of advance planning could save you money next year. Panorama has already published a preview edition of its holidays in Italy for 1998/99; book before the end of June for January 1999 and you could get a six-day lift pass for free.

Airtours 01706 232323; Crystal 0181-399 5144; Equity Total Ski 01273 298298; Escapades 0541 504001; First Choice Ski 0990 557755; Interski 01623 456333; Airtours are offering Sestriere. Anoth- Neilson 0990 994444; Panorama 01273 er new Thomson destination is nearby 206531; Solo's 0181-951 2811; Thomson



Italian advantage: Alagna is within easy reach of the Mont Blane tunnel

Photograph: Jess Stock

GREEN CHANNEL

One would think that sliding down a mountain on a couple of slats of wood was one of the least environmentally damaging things a fun-loving tourist could do. Unfortunately, when there are thousands of us doing it all at the same time our need for chalets. roads, ski-lifts, water and fuel puts a heavy hurden on the environment and on the local villages. We even

often need snow made for us by gasguzzling snow cannons.

The Alps, known as "the roof garden of Europe" with 5 million tourist beds, 12,000 ski lifts, 50 million tourists and 150 million shortterm visitors has long experienced the downside of catering to this increasingly popular downhill leisure pursuit. But now locals in the Lech valley in Austria, where visitors

outnumber locals by 7:1 in peak season, are reclaiming their valley. Community politicians decided to restrict access to the valley in order to preserve the quality of life for locals and visitors - so when their limit of 17,000 ski tickets has been reached, the entrance doors to the valley are closed.

The goal of their loftily named Ecologically Orientated Life and

M and 0 will daings b

Atlantic chart, noon today

Economy in Lech project is to marry a good time for the tourists with a healthy environment, a strong economy and an uncompromised local community. They are starting with solving problems such as traffic congestion and pollution and in the longer term will focus on

encouraging more efficient use of water, energy and other resources. Austria also has a "Green Village" ecolabelling programme in which 36 villages have agreed to ahide by ecological criteria. The Tyrol. for instance, has a Tyrolean Environmental Seal of Quality - an ecolabelling programme for accommodation and catering businesses. "Ecology and economy are not antagonists, but partners," says the Tyrolean tourism board.



SIMON CALDER

If you are reading this on the 8.20 from Waterloo to Bourg St Maurice, stop smirking. Not only are you on the first commercial train direct from London to the French Alps - you are also avoiding the utter chaos at Heathrow, following yesterday's fire at Terminal One. Disruption caused by the biaze is likely to continue for the rest of the weekend, and indeed the year, thousands of travellers will find themselves delayed at Heathrow.

Were it Los Angeles airport, this would not necessarily be a dreadful prospect. Independent readers have responded magnificently to the question posed by Kit Norman, who finds himself marooned there for several hours between flights on Christmas Day. What, he wondered, should he do to fill the time (besides, perhaps, enjoying a flame-grilled meal at Burger King)?

Felicity Pocock of Oxford suggests a \$20 taxi ride to Venice Beach: "Extraordinarily varied architecture, nice clear air in December, and even on Christmas Day there will be somewhere to eat on Washington Boulevard."

You need not go so far for somewhere to eat. David Rush and Angela James of Surrey recommend you look out at the airport for "a white, futuristic-looking huilding, a kind of tower with a hig dome covering it, with four large supporting legs which sweep down to the ground. It tended to get used a lot as a backdrop to Hollywood movies in the Sixties. We had always assumed it to be a hi-tech radar premises housing some sophisticated monitoring equipment, but it is open to the public, and goes by the strange title of The Theme

"By ascending the central lifts one arrives at the top to a restaurant and piano bar. The prices for food and drink are reasonable, the views are dramatic and the service is congenial; certainly an improvement on the LAX transit lounges."

Ray Heyworth of Edinburgh says his family actually profited from the stopover: "My children occupied time checking telephone coin boxes for unclaimed change, then spending the proceeds. This pastime, of course, is not limited to Los Angeles, airports or, even, children."

he ch-ch

It seems ungrateful to say so, but besides some jolly letters from readers, every day the post brings a Santa-sized sack of publicity material (the travel industry not yet having acknowledged the existence of e-mail; travel@independent.co.uk comes straight to me, for anyone who cares).

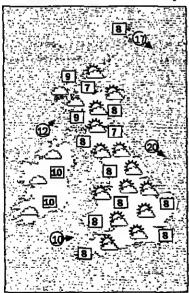
Most material goes straight into the recycling him. Occasionally a press release so wonderfully mad appears that it makes all the letter-opening worthwhile.

The late entrant for deal of the year, if not the decade, comes from Emirates. The Dubaibased airline wants to promote the inflight phones that are fitted to every seat of its Boeing 777s. So during December the airline is allowing passengers to call for as long as they like for a flat fee of US\$20 (about £12).

This gives an opportunity to save a fortune. Take a typical Emirates itinerary of London-Dubai-Hong Kong (from discount agents for about £500 return). Talkative travellers can call their aunts in Australia from 30,000ft rather than at home through BT; you could get a call worth £200 for a fraction of the regular price. And that's just on the first leg of your flight. Use the same deal flying Dubai-London to call a friend in the Falklands, and avoid a bill of about £570. You've more than covered the cost of your flight - and that's before the return leg. I just feel sorry for the person sitting next to you.

WEATHER

The British Isles, noon today



General summary and outlook Eastern Scotland will be mostly dry with some good sunny breaks, but the west will be cloudy with a little rain at times. Northern Ireland will be mostly cloudy with only a little early sunshine and an increasing risk of light rain by the afternoon. Temperatures will be near or a little above the normal. Meanwhile, England and Wales will have a bright, fresh day with patchy cloud and sunshine at times. It will leel rather cold with frost setting in

The coming week will be rather cold across most parts of the UK. II will stay mainly dry and bright with some sunshine, but It will become increasingly cold with sharp night trosts and the risk of mist and log paiches. Southern and eastern parts of England will have a noticeable wind-chill early next week with a growing risk of light showers breaking out which will falt as snow in places with possible light

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AA Roadwatch

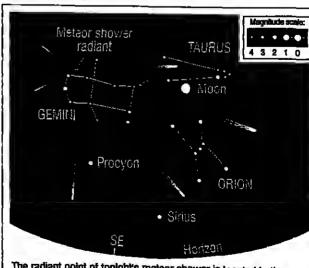
London, A1 between Watland Way Mill Hill Circus and Fineways Comer Car-riageway reduced to two lanes for long term roadworks. Until 31st May 1998 Greater London, M1, between J6-J5 Watbedaet control, with princers poly ma-lend area. Readworks and a controllow, with off peak and overnight lane and car-nageway closures. A SOmph speed limit is also in place. Until 22nd December West Yorkshire M1 J43-J42 Stourton to Lotthware (M62). A contration and a 50mph speed limit are in place. Until 13th here, 1929.

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Out and about with AA Road-watch call 0336 401 for the latest local and reshored leathe news Source. The Automobite Association. Calls charged at 39p per min licheap rate; 49p per min tall other times) mc

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The sky at night



The radiant point of tonight's meteor shower is located in the constellation Gemini. This chart shows the position of Gemini and nearby constellations over the south-eastern horizon at 11pm.

Nature's fireworks are due to be on the celestial entertainment programme again lonight, as Earth makes its annual encounter with the stream of space dust responsible for the Geminid meteor shower. This routinely one of the most prolific of all the regular showers, but this year the interference of the almost full Moon deprives observers of the dark skies needed for getting the most oul of the display. Nevertheless, if skies are clear, the fleeting streaks of some bright meteors should still be visible, traceable to the radiant of the shower just to the west of Castor. A favourable aspect of this shower is that Gemini is well up for most of the night. In 1983 astronomers discovered an asteroid, named Phaethon, which follows the same orbit in space as the meteoroids that give us the Geminid shower. It is presumed to be the defunct remains of a comet which has left the meteoroids in its wake.

حكما من الاجل

3/CITY BREAK



48 hours in the life of Bruges

For a short cut to the soul of the city, Martin Scudamore offers a guide.

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N. Y. ...

One of Bruges' great charms is its network of canals, but they can be smelly. Visit in winter and minimise the offence. Also, a trip by car in December offers a wonderful chance to stock up with Christmas spirit and wine on the way back to the ferry. The exchange rate is favourable at the moment (59 Belgian francs to the pound). And, although Bruges isn't huge, you almost certainly will be by the time you return - it's a foodies' paradise.

Beam down

We took the car Dover to Calais (from where Bruges is an easy hour's drive) benefiting from an extremely cheap deal through AA Motoring Holidays, which continues until 31 March. We paid £99 for a family of four, ferry plus three nights bed and breakfast, (children sharing parents' room), at the three-star Novotel, two miles south of the town. It's a perfectly acceptable, the language: the country is ostensibly bithough unexciting, base. You need to be an lingual, but in this northern Flemish-

surcharge for Friday and Saturday sailings.

If you're not driving, there's a jetfoil from Ramsgate to Ostend (100 minutes on Holyman Saliv Line (0990 595522) then a 15-minute train journey to Bruges, Or, from tomorrow, travel by Eurostar (0345 303030) on the new high-speed link to Brussels, and take the train back to Bruges (50 mins). That should cost around £79 return.

Get your bearings

The beauty of Bruges is concentrated by the compactness of its centre: the whole area is easily navigated on foot. Picture the city as two concentric teardrops: the larger one (3km by 2km) bounded by the main canal and ring roads, enclosing the smaller one, (2km by 1km), with Grote Markt as its focus, and in which virtually all the sights are to be found. The skyline is a joyful riot of church towers and staggered, gabled roofs, with almost every building redolent of centuries of Hanseatic history, although many are deceptively recent. Be careful with

AA member to book (although you can take speaking area some may take offence if you non-members with you), and there's a £10 make the effort to try French. Better to stick to English, spoken well everywhere.

Check in

For a four-star hotel in the centre, try the Prinsenhof in Ontvangersstraat, double room rate from about £60 to £110 (00 32 50 34 26 90); or the more modest but equally central one-star 't Koffieboontje (from £30) in Hallestraat (00 32 50 33 80 27). Weekends up to Christmas are already heavily booked; to check availability call the tourism office in Bruges, where they keep track of vacancies (00 32 50 44 86 86) or on the Internet: http://www.brugge.he in winter the office is open 9.30am to 5pm weekdays; at weekends and public holidays 9.30am to 1pm and from 2pm until 5.30pm.

The relative lack of cars in Bruges' centre allows full rein for the traditional sightseeing horse-drawn cab. What's more, in this town of medieval-looking buildings, the old-fashioned rigs don't seem out of place. Half an hour around the sights for four or five people costs £15, with rugs provided for cold

hands and knees. A stop part way for the horse to rest and feed gives the opportunity to visit the Béguinage ounnery, founded in 1245; but be careful not to get locked in, as our party did - the nuns appear to belong to a silent order and cannot easily direct you out again.

Your first sight of the canal pleasure hoats might suggest the other kind of trap - the tourist trap - but it would be a shame to miss the wonderful views of the city that can be enjoyed from the water. A trip takes about half-so-hour, complete with commentary. There are various points of embarkation around the centre: the cost is £3 per adult, £1.50 for children.

Take a hike ...

Make it a climb. The celebrated belfry tower in the Markt appears to have a slight lean, although this could be the effect of the Belgian beer. The winding 366-step staircase is a challenge, as there's harely room for people ascending to squeeze past those coming back down. Half-way up is a small museum in what was the medieval treasure room; two-thirds of the way is the mechanism for the magnificent 47 bells that play concerts three times a week, including Saturdays and Sundays in winter between 2.15 and 3pm. The helfry is open daily, 9.30am-12.30pm and 1.30-5pm, entry about £1.60.

Cyclists in Bruges benefit from being allowed to pedal in both directions down 50 normally one-way streets. If you can't bring your own machine, cycles can be hired for as little as £2.50 a day, from de Ketting, Gentpoortstraat 23 (050 34 41 96), or various other places including the station, at rates up to £5 per day.

Lunch on the run

On Saturdays on 't Zaod and on Wednesdays on Grote Markt, a gigantic market spreads out, selling mainly food, including the most enormous barbecued meat stall, with chickens and joints of lamb revolving on spits in a stately ballet.

For a treasure, don't miss Michelangelo's marble Madowna and Child in the Church of Our Lady in Marienstraat, avoiding Saturday services at 4pm and 5.30pm. from amateur chefs who have ordered the

Unfortunately, the outstanding Memling Museum, occupying the building which was the Hospital of St John in the Middle Ages, is closed for renovation until August 1998. Console yourself with a visit to the Groeninge Museum, with its fine collections of paintings, especially of Flemish Primitives, open in winter 9.30am-12.30pm and 2pm-5pm (not Tuesdays).

Window shopping

The area around Grote Markt boasts the best shops. One at the south-east corner is full of ultra-modern gadgets and designer items, such as a rubber vase which looked so much like porcelain that I just had to pretend to hand it to someone and then drop it at their feet.

Bruges opticians clearly feel a special need to flex their creative muscles; most displays seem to favour naked men (photos, sculptures) and one sports a particularly splendid display of phalluses in all possible shapes, sizes and shades, complete with amusing titles. For those who are easily embarrassed (why do previously glazed-over children suddenly become interested, and start asking questions?), the arrays of local lace in the dozens of shops devoted to this ancieot craft are much less controversial.

An aperitif

We went on a tour of the Straffe Hendrik brewery in Walplein, which was already a going concern in 1546. It costs £2, free glass of beer included. The hrewing process itself is disappointing - the entire operation occupies one small room; the rest of the tour is devoted to the history of the hrewery, but includes a clamber up to the roof to survey Bruges' terracotta rooftops. Tours are at 11am and 3pm all winter.

De mer dinner

The local speciality is seafood. Mussels are available by the bucket-load in every restaurant, and there are many other good fish dishes, some of which we enjoyed at 'I Keteltje, Oude Burg 20, just off Simon Stevinglein, At 't Mozarthuis in Huideovettersplein, right behind the fish market (mornings, Tuesday to Saturday), you dine by candlelight, with classical music io the background - but this has to compete with the hillowing smoke and sizzling sounds

mixed grill, which you cook yourself on a hot stone at your table. The real chef's steaks are excellent too.

Sunday morning: go to church

Bruges has many churches, but two of the most impressive are close neighbours in the centre, their spires punctuating the horizon from all directions. The 13th-15th century Church of Our Lady rises in glorious brickwork to 122m, while St Saviour's Cathedral, barely 300m to the north, is Bruges' oldest parish church (12th-15th eeotury) and contains some fine features. No sightseeing during services, which are at 11am at Our Lady, 10am and 6pm at St

Bracing brunch

The Cranenburg cafe is just one of many lining the northern edge of Grote Markt, where you can buy hreakfast, snacks and sandwiches, and enjoy the view. Typical fare includes: beer (85p), coffee (£1), croissants (85p), ham and cheese haguette (£3). bacon and eggs (£3.50), apple cake (£1.65). Is that belt getting a little tight?

A walk in the park

If you have brought the car, the best place to leave it for free is at the southern edge of the town, off the ring road. That way you'll walk through the Minnewater park to reach the central attractions, and you'll already be familiar with the charming Lake of Love. This body of water is at a different level from the rest of the canals, so doesn't form part of the boat tour. Even if it's not market day, make a point of visiting 't Zand, the square at the western edge of the central area, not just to choose from among its wall-to-wall restaurants, but to enjoy the superb modern fountain, which is even more impressive wheo illuminated

The icing on the cake

This has to be the justly famed Belgian chocolate, available from numerous outlets even on Sunday, wheo many other shops are closed. Stock up on those delightful, and very reasonably priced, twotone chocolate "fruits de mer", or make a custom selection from the many hand-made varieties available. Just keep off the scales for a while after your return.



Photographs: Brian Harris/B&S **Photography**



RED CHANNEL

Trouble spots around the world: this week, the Victoria Falls

"Victoria Falls is a truly speciacular sight, and has been a source of income for Zimbabwe and Zambia from the thousands of tourists who visit it each year. Unfortunately, yet another natural wonder has been corrup!-

ed by the greed of a developing nation - to the extent that many travellers can no longer afford to see it. "A year ago, entrance to the Vic-

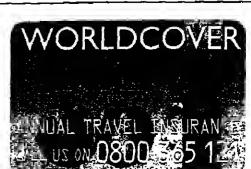
toria Falls on the Zimbabwe border rose from US\$5 to a whopping \$20 as officials tried to take advantage of the influx of overseas travellers. This turning potential tourists away from son you can swim in the Champagne the Internet at www.takeoff.beeb.com is in line with the great misconcep-

tion ing developing countries that if vou are a foreigner you must have buckets of money. The cost of the entrance to the Falls taints its beauty, to the idea of exploiting tourists. You and is poor value - \$20 is a press on a backpacker's hudget. Instead of bringing in more money for the

both their country and their people. Pools directly above the Falls - a spect-"Fortunately, on the Zambian side they have been slow to catch on

can cross the border and view the Falls From 'Travellers' Café', one of the feafrom the Zamhian side for a mere nurs of Take Off?, the latest addition US\$3. Although you don't see the to the BBC's commercial on-line sercountry, the Zimbabwean officials are postcard view of the Falls, in dry sea-vice beeb ashe BBC. You can find it on

acular experience." lan, Johannesburg













Hitsville USA: the Supremes take centre stage during Detroit's dancing days

Photograph: Redfern

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A ghost town called Motown

In tune with the Christmas Motown re-release of the classic Chartbusters alhums of the Sixties, Nigel Williamson takes a tour of Hitsville USA - hut finds that they're hardly dancing in the streets in Detroit today.

If the average American were lying on the couch and the shrink said "Detroit", the men in the white coats would be swiftly summoned if "cars" were not the instant response. The next thing to come to mind would almost certainly be Tarnla Motown, and the patient's right foot would be tapping out that four-four beat before he or she could even get the words out.

Detroit is the Motor City but it's other name used to be Hitsville USA, musical home to Diana Ross and the Supremes, Stevic Wonder, Marvin Gaye, the Temptations. Smokey Robinson and the Miracles, Gladys Knight and the Pips, the Jackson Five and countless others who ensured that the hits just kept on coming.

Yet how swiftly the icons of our youth fade and die. We walked into the arrivals hall at Detroit's Wayne County airport to find that instead of "Dancing In The Street" they were playing the latest Spice Girls single. Then, when we collected our hire car from Alamo. instead of a Cadillac we were offered a Nissan streamlined metal box.

You wonder why modern Detroit exists. Downtown is neutron-bomb dead, eerily deserted in the evening and like a ghost town at weekends. Sitting in a bar later in Birmingham, one of the anonymous hut surprisingly leafy outlying suburbs that have replaced the once throbbing heart of the city. Mark Laval, a large and amiable type who would not be out of place in Cheers, heard our English accents and asked: "What in hell brought you here?" He was incredulous that anyone would want to visit the city where he has worked as a car dealer for the past 20 years. They've tried everything here and nothing works." he said mournfully.

Even the locals say Detroit is a city that has lost its soul. There are abandoned, decaying buildings everywhere, yet the dank shells have more character than the attempts that have been made at redevelopment. On the river front looking across to Ontario (by a geographical quirk. Detroit faces south into Canada), the vast Renaissance Center. with its four circular towers of reflective glass, is spectacular from the outside, yet inside the shops and restaurants are sad and desolate. One former mayor complained that after opm you could fire a cannon down

and no one would even notice.

third of those produced in the US - but the romance has gone. The great names of Pon-(and are all preserved for posterity on the map of Detroit and its environs) but the new models with their smooth, aerodynamic designs all look indistinguishable from my Japanese-styled metal box.

troit, too, but the city no longer provides the beat for the nation. Motown moved its operations to Los Angeles in 1972 and the music was never the same again. Nor was the city, which in the Thirties and Forties was alive with jazz and blues, full of afterhours drinking and dancing establishments - known for some obscure reason as "hlind pigs" - and inter-racial clubs. called "black and tans". It was that spirit which Berry Gordy Jr tapped when, almost 40 years ago, he started a record label that was to change the face of modern music.

Today the plain, weatherboarded house at 2648 West Grand Boulevard would look as anonymous as any other middle-America post-war consumerist home, were it not for the "Hitsville USA" sign on the front lawn. Gordy moved here in 1959, confining his family to the first-floor apartment so that he could realise his dream by building a recording studio downstairs.

And what dreams were manufactured in that tiny studio. I had assumed that Gordy had merely cut his first records here, and that when the Supremes made the big time in 1964, the label had moved into more spacious premises. But no, every single great Motown record you can think of was cut in this one room in this nondescript house until the move to the West Coast - from the Four Tops' thrilling "Reach Out (I'll Be

MAKING FOR MOTOWN

Northwest flies daily from Gatwick to Detroit and British Airways from Heathrow. For travel in January. Bon Voyage (01703 330332) quotes £349 on Northwest, or £273 on United if you are prepared to change planes in Chicago or Washington DC. If you want to combine it with Miami, then American offers a fare including the Florida city with Detroit for around £350, through discount agents.

the main boulevard of Woodward Avenue There)" to Stevie Wonder's thundering anthem "Uptight"; from the Temptations Detroit still manufactures motors - one funky "Get Ready" to the Jackson Five's storming debut "I Want You Back".

The studio was open 24 hours a day, sevtiac, Lincoln, Plymouth and Cadillac live on en days a week, such was the prolific output. The original recording schedule from a day in November 1966, still preserved on the wall, conveys the magic "3.00 Supremes. 5.00 Temptations".

All of the original recording equipment There is still music being made in De- is still here, more rudimentary than what many a modern teenager has in his bedroom. Yet for any music lover the thrill is indescribable. Three microphones descend from the ceiling and the thought of Diana, Mary and Florence standing there way back in 1964 singing those breathy "ooh-ooh-oohs" is irresistible. During our visit, three elderly black women on vacation from New York were equally taken with the image, and stood there harmonising their very own Supremes tribnte. You can sit at the piano played by Stevie Wonder, and close your eyes to hear the late Marvin Gaye hitting those high notes on "I Heard it Thru the Grapevine". If you don't believe in ghosts, this is the sort or room that just might change your mind. Forget Graceland: this is quite simply the most important musical shrine in America.

In the control room, which is the size of a broom cupboard, there is a hole in the floor by the mixing desk, where Barry Gordy sat for 13 years tapping his foot until he had worn right through both the carpet and the linoleum. Upstairs, his apartment is preserved as a perfect time-capsule of Sixties black American style, with tables of strange geometrical shape, purples and greens and lava lamps. Elsewhere are the Sixties cigarette and sweet machines used by Gordy's artists between sessions. He ran a tight ship. charging the teenage Stevie Wonder and the 10-year-old Michael Jackson 10 cents for a candy bar. Another room contains gold discs, sequined costumes worn by the Supremes, and items from the stage wardrobe of Jackson, who pays his dues with a large stipend that keeps the museum going.

Elsewhere in Detroit, the Motown trail runs cold. Attempts to find the house where Diana Ross was born, at 5736 St Antoine, reveal only parking lots and wasteland. A search for Smokey Robinson's old house on Belmont Street is similarly frustrating. Yet it matters not. The soul of Detroit is preserved for ever in all its glory in the Motown Historical Museum.

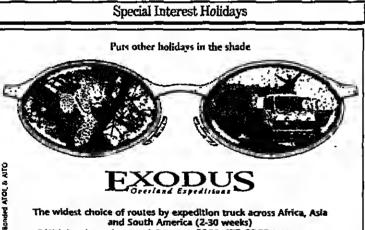
The Motown Historical Museum opens daily from 10am to 5pm, admission \$6.

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5/MUSIC

Motown









Family album: Bowie ran Sunday night folk sessions at the Three Tuns, above, now called the Rat and Parrot, before his meteoric rise

Photograph: Andrew Buurman

The ch-ch-changing face of Ziggy's Beckenham

vould be in no doubt that a very amous rock star indeed hailed rom those parts. Andy Bull set out on the trail of fame - in suburbia.

This is not Memphis. It is Beckenham, slap hang in the suburban drah-lands of south London, and the fact that David Bowie grew up here and, indeed, did not leave until his 1972 album Ziggy Stardust made him a mafor star, has passed the place by. It's the same story in Dartford, four A to Z pages east, where Mick Jagger and Keith Richard

Why is it, when there is very nearly a superstar for every suburb, that these places are not bristling with blue plaques. offering hus tours round the relevant sites and opening childhood homes to the public, kitted out in period G-plan with a guitar left nonchalantly on a candlewick bedspread and a lyric scrawled in a schoolbook on the kitchen table?

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I put it down to indifference and emharrassment. Indifference from local hurghers, and the embarrassment of rock stars - for whom image is all - about their mundane suburban roots. Bowie even used to claim he was from Brixton. But the truth is out there, in Beckenham and in Dartford, though it took a day trip to find it.

As the train rattles off through South

n Memphis, say, or Liverpool, you London you can see why these boys would disown their origins. The inner city, with its seedy shops and dubious communal houses, would have been nectar to a suburban kid.

Imagine the embarrassment of taking the ultra-cool, kookie American chick called Angie, whom you met in a West End club, down this line and getting out at Beck-

Imagine running the gauntlet of selling shops prints of the parish church. Fabulous Creatures glass animals and "superb sausages handmade on the premises", as you make for the pub where you run an arts lah and org-

How his heart would have sunk as the train took him out past cool and slightlyscary Brixton and relentlessly on through Heme Hill with its detached villas and wide, green, open spaces. Why. Sydenham Hill station even has a nature reserve! Then it gets really ridiculous - you get places with joke names, like Penge.

enham Junction, with its ornate Victori-

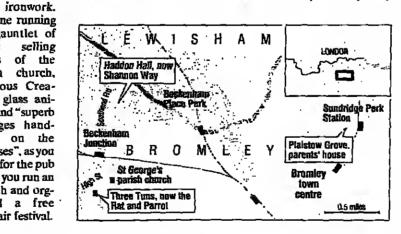
anised a free open-air festival.

The pub ~ Bowie knew it as the Three Tuns but it is now the Rat and Parrot - was

an obvious starting-point on my Rock the Suburbs tour. He used to run Sunday night folk sessions in the back room. After his first hit single, "Space Oddity", in 1969 he got more ambitious, and renamed these sessions an Arts Lab, where a strange hybrid of mime, poetry, art. Buddhist incuntation. tie-dyeing classes and free-form jazz took place. Bowie even wrote a song, called Memory of a Free Festival, about a multi-media event he organised here, which contains the toe-curling line. "I kissed a lot

But David Bowie did just that,

of people that day". If this were America the Rat and Parrot, which stands behind a particularly heavy



camouflage of window boxes and hanging would boast Ziggy hurgers and Young American fries, and a tall glass of milk would he a Thin White Drink. Mannequins would be sporting the costumes of

the Spiders from Mars.

Not so in Beckenham. The barmaid sounded slightly apologetic as she broke it to me that they had absolutely no Bowie memorabilia on the premises. "There might have been some once." she said. "hut since it was taken over by Scottish and Newcastle it got themed like this." She looked around in sitence at the openplan-but-olde-worlde place, with its customers sipping cappuccinos and eating late breakfast. There was nothing more to be said.

In between his first, isolated hit single and his emergence three years later as a fully formed rock star, David Bowie lived with Angie in a cavernous flat at Haddon Hall, a Gothic Victorian villa just north of the town centre, at 42 Southend Road. Here he wrote most of the material for the alhums The Man Who Sold the World, Hunky Dony and Ziggy Standust. Night after night, with his guitarist Mick Ronson and the rest of his hand, he honed songs such as "Moonage Davdream", "Changes", "Andy Warhol", "Queen Bitch" and "Kooks". Bowie has said that the character of Ziggy Stardust, the first of many strange and competling personas that he created for himself, was born in Haddon Hall.

baskets, would be called Bowie's. The menu vast and set so far back that they are almost out of sight, I discover that Haddon Hall is no more; No 42 has been replaced hy a block of flats and a road called Shan-

> In 1970, while living at Haddon Hall, David and Angie got married at Bromley Register office. If they had married at a wedding chapel in Las Vegas, their names would still be up in lights outside. But in

Bromley, I found, they won't even confirm

that a marriage took place. Haddon Hall became a commune, a court in which Bowie was the ever-feted king. Over-indulgence in sex, drugs and anything else that was going, was the norm. Maybe this accounts for the fact that, on the day Neil Armstrong became the first man on the moon, David saw an alien spacecraft land in Southend Road. And perhaps mind-expanding substances fuelled his desire to get in touch with any aliens in the Beckenham area. One night he stood on the roof aiming a wire coathanger at the skies, until a gotfer on the Beckenham Place Park course behind Haddon Hall yelled at him: "Do you get BBC2?" This, presum-

ahly, was a topical joke at the time. Bowie's weirdness was not an act. There was madness on his mother's side of the family and his constant fear was that it would be visited upon him, as it had heen on his half-bother, Terry Burns, Terry, 15 years Bowie's senior, suffered increasing-

But as I reach the spot, past houses so ly severe bouts of schizophrenia and was Coulsdon. He eventually killed himself by Jumping under a train at the neighbouring Coulsdon South station.

> . Terry had a huge influence on David during his early teens, and inspired the songs "All The Madmen" on The Man who Sold the World, and "The Bewlay Brothers" on Hunky Dory.

> In the days he was close to Terry, David was living at the family home, 24 Plaistow Grove, a mile or so to the west. As I walked there I reflected that it was his streak of weirdness that lifted Bowie out of the ordinary and made him a star, someone who could constantly reinvent himself. Without the strangeness, he would probably never have risen above his suhurban

Plaistow Grove is a tight, square cul-desae of terraced cottages beside Sundridge Park Station. The house next door to Bowie's old home bears a plaque which reads: "An artist lives here". An artist lived next door, too, but there is nothing to tell you so, or hint that this was the place where a nine-year-old picked up a guitar, thrashed out a Chuck Berry song, and announced to his startled parents that he was going to

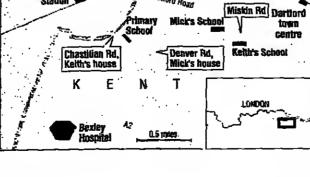
Today, the only music comes from a pub called the Crown, "Live Duo Karma" and Mike and Beanie are among the forthcoming attractions.

Dartford: suburb where no Stone was left unturned

Dartford is not a pretty place, but a generation ago it offered lifechanging opportunities for Mick Jagger and Keith Richards. Andy Bull revisited their old stamping-ground.

I took the train from Sundridge Park in search of Mick and Keith. Trains and stations had become inseparable to the story I was following, and Simdridge Park was a particularly nice one. It's a spotless little place, hidden in a cutting and flanked by heech trees, and exists on a little three-station line that would take me just one stop on my journey to Grove Park. It even has a period open-air gents' urinal.

I could tell I was in a timewarp from the only other passenger. It was Wednesday, and he was still reading last Sunday's News of the World. I changed trains and headed for Lewisham, from where I could get to Dartford. On the way I sat back with my feet up. improvising that scene from



Quadrophenia where the sound track is "Out of my Brain on the

N D

Dartford is not a pretty sight. The town centre is swamped under monoliths, including the Orchard Theatre, a multi-storey car park and a string of warehouse shops. To the east the Glaso Wellcome headquarters manages to look exactly like an architectural model of a new building, rather than the real thing: all immaculate grass, gushing fountains and neat little ligures striding purposefully.

and nor do the staff. It is, nevertheless, historic,

The station is a mess. The indicator boards don't work.

Because it was here, in 1960, on the London-bound platform, that former friends and neighbours Mick Jagger and Keith Richards were reunited. Mick was going to lectures at the London School of Economics: Keith to Sidcup Art College, where he was studying technical illustration. Mick was carrying a pile of blues records, and on the train journey they got talking about what music they liked. Shortly afterwards Keith

LONDON

nined Mick in a band called Little Boy Blues and the Blue Boys, and the partnership from which the Rolling Stones would develop was born.

I walked out to their childhood homes, past the schools that had divided them. Mick went to the grammar in West Hill, Keith to the technical school one street away in Miskin Road. If Dartford is a suburb, then the little Thirties enclave where Mick and Keith grew up is a suburb of the suburb. Keith lived in a flat above a now-empty shop at 33 Chastillian Road, across the street from a pub called The Dart - referring, if its sign is to be believed, to a river rather than the game of arrows - and a gift shop called Grott, presumably in homage to Reggie Perrin.

First left is Denver Road, where Mick lived at number 39, and in the garden of which, each morning, he went through a daily regime of physical exercise instilled in him by his fitness instructor father. Oh, how the neighbours must have laughed. As I walked along, those old familiar suburhan smells of creosote and conifer hedges hit me once again. There was Number 39, with its neat little front garden full of orange marigolds and its semi-detached front freshly pebhledashed. And suddenly I re- anne Faithfull, spent seven alised that the suburbs were growing on the - that they have a character that is cruelly overlooked. After all, if stucco is quite acceptable on New Mexico puehlos, why is pebbledash so derided? If cobblestones and sash windows are OK in Coronation Since, why can't UPVC and pink concrete hrick-effect paving be admired in Acacia Avenue? And then, as I trekked on

down Chastillian Road to Wentworth Primary School, where the Glimmer Twins first met as five-year-olds. the answer to my question presented itself. It is because pebbledash, plastic windows and concrete blocks are innately, irrefutably horrible.

The suburbs were beginning to get to me. as they got to Mick and Keith. But before I fled I had to pay homage at one last location - Bexley Hospital, just across the A2 in old Bexley Lanc. In fact, this hospital features twice in the Rolling Stones story. In the Seventies, it was the place where Mick's ex-girlfriend, Mari-

months trying to cure her drug addiction. But, in the late Fifties, it had a far more important role in forming the Mick Jagger that we know and love. For it was here

that, working as a porter during his school holidays, Mick lost his virginity, in a cupboard, to a nurse. Proving, once and for all, that, whatever else they may lack, there is sex in the suburbs.



Who wants to pay museum charges? Catherine Stebbings devises a free day out in Britain's oldest university city.

Bewitched by the mask of the devil doctor. and faced with a line of shrunken heads the clutches of flesh-eating plants and chocolate in between.

Oxford is a city that has nurtured aca- The deal demics for over 800 years, so it is not surprising that it houses some magnificent collections, bequeathed, collected and looted from around the world. It is perhaps more unexpected to find that so much is free to the public. A large student population also ensures a range of inexpensive and informal places to eat, making Oxford excellent value for a family day out.

The city's museums and galleries are all within walking distance of one another. While each one offers more than enough to see, museum hopping is easy, rewarding and particularly good for children who get bored in a single place. It also allows Hannah: We did a lot, but I don't think it you to look round the city while avoiding its appalling commercial centre.

The diversity of Oxford museums caters for all tastes. Britain's oldest museum, The Ashmolcan, is the largest of the University museums, with a superb collection of art and applied arts from around the world. foyer, and an active education department guides hordes of visitors around the highlights, which include such diverse artefacts as the exquisite Anglo-Saxon cloisonne Alfred Jewel, fine Italian renaissance paintings, and the shell-studded deerskin cloak worn by Pocahontas's father,

Meanwhile, the florid Victorian architecture of the University Museum complements its polished cases of insects. rocks and stuffed fowl below. Bones and bodies are mainly intact, except for the dodo - only his head and feet are preserved.

Nothing, though, can prepare you for the eccentric collection of anthropological trophies to be seen at the Pitt Rivers collection, housed within the museum. After such sights, even the most avant-garde ex-

Behind the colleges, the vast meadows and parks offer a perfect respite from the traffic-torn centre. On the banks of the river beside Magdalen Bridge are the Botanic Gardens, with living plunder from around the world.

The visitors

City breakers were Hannah, eight, and Imostrung up like bobbing apples, we ran into geo and Sophie, both seven. Between them they wanted to see paintings, dihuman corpses, and still had time for hot nosaurs and people punting on the river.

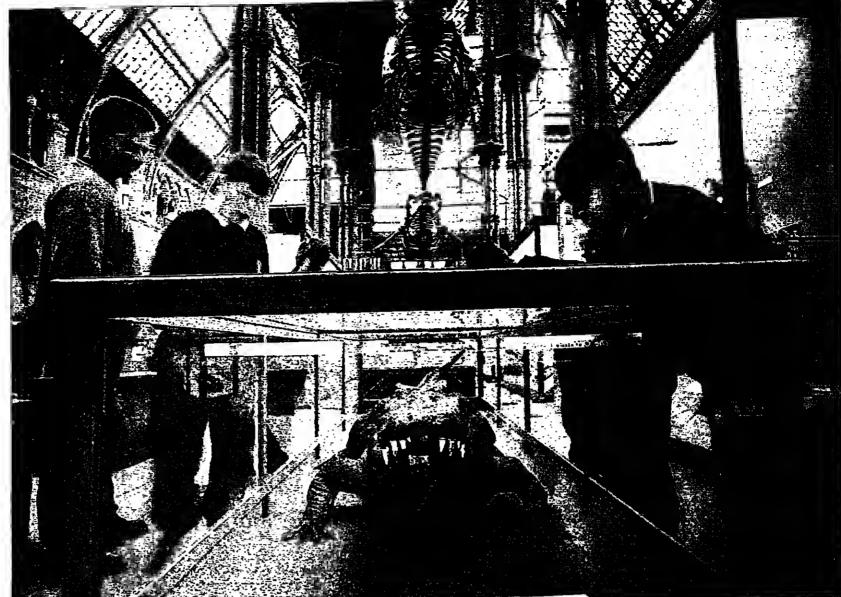
We took the bus in from the Park and Ride to the Ashmolean Museum, where we concentrated on the Egyptian and Western art galleries. We took a short walk to Browns for hot chocolate and croissants, and then continued our museum crawl to the University Museum and the adjoining Pitt Rivers Museum. We walked past the central University buildings before lunching in the covered market. We walked through Christ Church Meadow, had a rest on the river bank, and finished in the humid greenhouses of the the Botanical Garden.

was too much. It was a good way to see Oxford, and I am glad we didn't go shopping. I really liked the Ashmolean, in particular the picture galleries. I liked the very colourful picture of the hunt [by Uccello]. Some people were on horses and others were on the ground with the dogs. They wore Students still sketch classical casts in the strange clothes like red tights and soft-looking hats. The wood was very dark, but you could see lots of flowers on the ground.

I thought the Pitt Rivers was a very unusual museum, with lots to see. There were Eskimo clothes and snow shoes, bagpipes, shrunken heads, bows and arrows and lots of weird things, I drew a picture of the totom pole and a very old Indian doll.

Sophie: All the museums in Oxford seem very old-fashioned. I suppose they are here because of the university.

The best museum was the University Museum where there were lots of stuffed animals, and bones of animals and dinosaurs. There was even a human skeleton. I looked at a stone through a hig magnifying glass and saw lots of crystals. There hibition at the Museum of Modern Art was a dark room with lots of glowing crys-(Moma) would seem relatively tame. tals of different colours; pink, blue, green,



Bones and bodies: Oxford's University Museum

Photograph: David Rose

*STATE

WHY SHOP

AROUND FO

purple and white. I really liked the Egyptian gallery in the Ashmolean. They painted people in profile but you could see their whole eye. The mummies were really

Imogen: Oxford is a nice place, full of students and bicycles. The colleges where they live look very grand, with nice gardens. We also saw quite a few homeless people; one had a three-year-old child.

I think we went to too many museums but I liked them all, even if I got tired. The University Museum was good: it looked like a station with a glass roof. There was no hands-on anywhere but I was too busy look-

cakes with things like Spice Girls and Telly-

We saw lots of people punting on the river and children feeding the ducks. In the Botanical Garden I saw a cocoa plant, a banana tree, carnivorous plants and lots of cacti like you see in cartoons. We didn't go to the Disney shop.

Oxford orientation

Transport and parking: Oxford's mainline station is 10 minutes' walk from the centre. Cur parking in the centre is inadequate and expensive for daily rates, but ly. Bate collection of Musical Instru- Toilets: St Aldates, Market Street.

The covered market was fun, with lots of butchers' shops, a flower shop and a cake centre. Park and Rides at Peartree (north). shop, where we watched them decorate the Redbridge (south). Seacourt (west) and Thornhill (east) cost 50p per day plus £1.20 bus fare, children free.

Tourist information: The Old School, Gloucester Green, open Mon-Sat. 9.30am-5pm (01865 726871).

Free attractions: Ashmolean Museum, Beaumont Street. (01856 278000). Open Tues-Sat 10am-4pm, Sun 2pm-4pm, University Museum. Parks Road, (01856 270949), Open Mon-Sat 12pm-5pm. Pitt Rivers. Parks Road, (01865 270949). Open Mon-Sat 11am-4,30pm. Botanical Garden, greenhouses open 2pm-4pm dai-

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Food and drink for families: There is a good range of pubs, restaurants and cafés but the following are pleasant for snacks and meals for all ages: Browns, 7 Woodstock Road; Ashmolean Museum Café, Beaumont Street; Mortons, 104 Covered Market (for spectacular hot chocolate); Moma café, Pembroke Street (good for mums with young babies). Little Clarendon Street has nice bistros and an excellent icecream parlour.

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Box of delights: with small, sturdy leaves box works well for topiary shapes - and it's an undernanding plant, needing clipping once a yea Photographs: Garden Picture Library



Superficially sober, but mad underneath

The holly and the ivy are all very well, but isn't the box included? Anna Pavord advises on the best treatment for sturdy evergreens.

The most pleasing bit of the garden at the mo-ment is the border that runs under the east wall of the house. "Border" is too grand a word for it. It's a strip, only 3ft wide, and I can't make it any wider because it butts straight on to the drive. For years I fiddled around there with various herbaceous things, trying to make them look less like sullen teenagers lined up for a school photograph. Perennials don't take kindly to heing set out in lines.

But topiary does, and this proved to be the answer for the strip - which is now planted with a line of box trees, cones alternating with balls. When I first put them in, there was room to plant groups of 'Quail' jonquils in between. Now the skirts of the cones have spread and there is less than a foot to spare from one box tree to the next. But there is still space, just, for a thick line of aconites along the front of the strip. They are the first flowers I look for in the New Year.

Box needs clipping just once a year, some time around August or September. The only other excitement in my box trees' lives is their annual mulch: thick, dark mushroom compost which has just been spread several inches thick. Nobody could call them demanding plants. But they aren't wallpaper, either. I find them oddly schizophrenic: superficially sober, but underneath that grave exterior, essentially frivolous, mad even.

Lined up underneath the house wall, they are now the first things I see as I turn into the drive. In spring, they are overshadowed by the blossom of the cherry on the other side of the drive. In summer they are upstaged by the sheets of clematis that fall off the wall above them. But at this time of the year, they have no rivals.

Unfortunately, clipped box has become a cliché. You get no points for choosing it over some sexy newcomer with a name that no one can pronounce. And it is often criminally ill-treated. planted in pots either side of a front door and then left without food or drink for weeks. A box bush with bald patches looks more pathetic than a moulting parrot. Though it is tolerant of drought, it doesn't necessarily like it. To keep their glossy evergreen looks in pots, they need water and regular boosts of slow-release fertiliser. I use granules of Osmacote to feed box trees in pots. If you sprinkle it on in spring, it will last for the rest of the season.

If a plant is good, it can survive the humil-iation of becoming a chiché. Those who plant box only because it is The Thing at the moment, willsweep it all away when the next Thing comes along. But they will be lucky to find another evergreen as adaptable and as handsome. Yew is good, of course, but on a small scale it makes coarser topiary shapes than box. Holly is wonderful, too. hut cannot be clipped as easily as box.

Box works best for reasonably small, compact topiary shapes such as cones and spheres, because its leaf is so small. Shapes fill out roundly, whereas holly, which branches more sparsely, takes much longer to close up the spaces between its leaves. Box is box is box to new gardeners, hut enthusiasts, such as Elizabeth Braimhridge, of the Langley Boxwood Nursery in Hampshire, grow more than 70 different kinds. The species most commonly used for topiary is the native Buxus sempervirens, the box of Box Hill in Surrey. 'Suffruticosa', the type with smaller leaves and a dwarf habit, is the one you need to use for

It gets taken for granted perhaps because there's no one season when it is very much better than at another. Its flowers are microscopic. It doesn't have berries. That's where the holly scores, and is perhaps why the holly and the ivy had a carol written about them, while box got left in the cold. Ivy, like bolly, is at its best now, a catalogue.

and although its berries are nowhere near as showy as the holly's, there are more of them.

Some people fret about ivies, as though they

were vampires, sucking mortar out of walls and the sap from living trees. They can certainly smother trees, but they don't appear to live off them in a parasitic way. Ivy grows from its own roots in the ground, and if you cut a stem that is growing up a tree, the part above the cut dies. The suckers that clamp on to the tree are there to hold the ivy in place, not to provide a mainline into the tree's own veins.

The suckers are tenacious, so that if you pull ivy off old walls, it will bring mortar with it. But only if the mortar was loose in the first place. We had this problem on an old retaining wall in the garden. It was bulging and dangerously fragile. In the end, I clipped the ivy against the wall, which brought it under control without the complications of trying to prise it off altogether. Now it looks more like a hedge than a wall, with the complicated interlacing of the ivy's stems, I think, keeping the masonry upright rather than bringing it to its knees.

It would be no good doing that on a wooden; board fence. The hull-nosed growing tips of the ivy would push their way through the cracks between the boards and gradually force them apart. The same thing would happen on a larch-lap fence. But ivy can transform the hideous chainlink fences that developers sometimes put up round new houses. In small plots, a chain link fence covered with clipped ivy has the added advantage of taking up less room than other hedg-ing plants. Especially Leyland cypress. Any train journey shows you what hideous dark prisons these make of the average back garden.

But if you want ivy to flower and berry, you have to give it its head. Ivy can either climb or creep along the ground, depending on where it finds itself. If it climbs, it will change after a while into a completely different animal. A climbing ivy such as our native Hedera helix has lobed leaves arranged flatly in a single plane on either side of the stem. But when it has built itself up sufficiently, it launches out into great hillowing side

These stems don't need sucker pads, so don't have them. The leaves on the side growths lose their lobes and become much larger and more rounded in outline (though no less glossy) than the first kind of leaf. And at this time of the year, each of the stems finishes in a miniature explosion of berries. They are grouped in round heads, like the seedheads of dandelions. hut much chunkier. The young berries are cream, then become green with brown tops, and finally blackish. They remind me of the esimplicated models of molecules that scientists build

Creeping ivy never gets to this stage, which is a pity, but it makes unparalleled ground cover under trees, and in other places where it is too dark and shady for grass. If you grow it as a carpet under trees, keep it off the trees' trunks. That: is not because it will necessarily hurt them, but because you will lose the pleasure of the contrast_ between the two - rough-textured, elephantcoloured trunks rising out of a wash of glossy. leaved green. Add evergreen hart's tongue ferns and a few clumps of Iris foetidissima (spears of , evergreen leaves and berries of an agreeably shocking orange), for a winter planting that will continue to shine in summer.

Box (including ready trained topiary) is available. from the Langley Boxwood Nursery, Rake, near Liss, Hampshire GU33 7JL (01730 894467). Open Monday to Friday, Saturday by appointment only. Plants are available by mail order. Send four first-class' stamps for a catalogue. More than 350 kinds of iv are on sale at Whitehouse Ivies, Eggesford Gardens, Chulmleigh, Devon EX18 7QU (01769. 580250). Open daily 9am-5pm. Plants are availuble by mail order. Send six first-class stamps for

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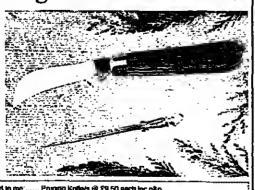
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The promiscuous parasite in party mood

Whatever happens beneath the Christmas greenery, mistletoe enjoys its own wanton reputation for opportunism, infidelity and cohabitation. David Foster has been playing

Ever since Adam and Eve's time, apples have enjoyed a certain seductive reputation. And mistletoe. whose potency was first exploited by the Druids, continues to invoke what a Victorian parson once primly described as "a strange spirit of superstitious frivolity too well known to need description". These two symbols of human

desire maintained a clandestine relationship until the mid-19th century, when Dr HG Bull's survey Mistletoe in Herefordshire first revealed them living happily together in local apple orchards.

True to its voluptuous nature, the mistletoe plant begins life by penetrating the timber of its "host" tree, so stimulating a deformity that ultimately grafts both tree and parasite firmly together.

It was fitting that Dr Bull's carly study focused on Herefordshire. When the first nationwide mistletoe survey was mounted in 1969-70 by the Botanical Society of the British Isles (BSBI), it established the applegrowing areas of Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Gloucestershire as the undisputed bomeland of this wayward plant.

Yet since the war, traditional apple orchards have been disappearing at an alarming rate, with losses of around 90 per cent reported in some counties. Although the decline has been less marked in the Severn Vale, ecologists at BSBI and the wild plant conservation charity Plantlife recently organised a further nationwide survey to assess the effect on the mistletoe population.

Between 1994 and 1996, many thousands of volunteers sent in sightings, including details of the location and species of host trees. Detailed analysis is still going on, but it's already clear that mistletoe retains a firm hold in the Severn Vale.

"There have been both losses and gains", says the survey co-ordinator. Jonathan Briggs. "The new study was immensely popular, and some of the 'gains' may simply be the result of more enthusiastic recording. Similar effects have been found in other surveys, and we will have to take this into account when we produce the final report."

Although, as expected, many of the losses are in places where apple orchards have disappeared, mistletoe is naturally promiscuous. Given the opportunity, it will grow happily on some 50-60 tree species, including

lime, poplar and hawthorn, Jonathan Briggs remains sanguine: "The evidence from other areas suggests there is no overall threat - mistletoe

seems to be doing fine elsewhere." The practicalities of harvesting are another matter. Because mistletoe is most easily gathered from apple orchards, Jonathan Briggs admits that its changing distribution patterns may affect the origin of Christmas supplies. Mistletoe has been imported from French orchards for many years, he says, and he points out that "the UK market has probably never been self-sufficient".

This year, however, may turn out to be the exception. Nick Champion. auctioneer at England's largest mistletoe market in Tenhury Wells. reports that the Christmas trade has been buoyant.

"We offered 930 lots of between a third and half a bundredweight yesterday," he told me early in December. "We haven't seen any French mistletoe yet this year," he said, and added that the foreign greenery tends to arrive a bit later anyway, because of the distances it has to travel.

Meanwhile, if you're wondering why scientists should be so interested in a parasite that supports just three kinds of hug, a moth, and a good deal of festive ribaldry, remember that the plant's healing properties have been known for thousands of years. The

Roman naturalist Pliny recalled Druid priests using mistletoe extracts to cure a variety of ailments, and as a fertility drug for farm animals. Priests cut the mistletoe from the trees with a golden sickle, and caught it in a white sheet to prevent the magical powers from draining away into the soil.

Pagan ritual? Perhaps. But even today, mistletoe is an ingredient in homeopathic remedies for high blood pressure and epilepsy, and is still used for a variety of animal treatments. In Germany and Switzerland, the mistletoe extracts Helixor and Iscador are among several used in the production of modern anti-cancer drugs and, says Jonathan Briggs, "harvesters still take great care to prevent mistletoe coming into contact with the ground".

But as Christmas approaches, mistletoe's main attraction, of course, lies in its romantic appeal. Critics of imported French varieties say that the foreign plants have fewer berries than the English plant, and wilt faster after a cross-Channel journey. There should be no shortage of good English mistletoe in the shops this year - the question is, can you resist the appeal of a French kiss?

For details about Plantlife, the wild plant conservation charity, send n stamped addressed envelope to Plantlife, The Natural History Museum, London SW7 5BD.

9/GARDENING



Heaven scent

garden's sweetest smells. Nailo Green offers a guide to the most appealing.

Nothing sells like scent at this time of year. We huy it, often at great expense, for our mothers, our lovers and our spotty little brothers, to splash on and spray under. Perhaps we're trying to conjure up the heady days of summer, when natural scents abound. At Christmas we can't expect the same intensity of perfume in the garden, but even in winter we can satisfy this natural yearning for fragrance by growing scented winter-flowering plants.

Plant scents are part of a plant's adaptation to its hahitat. The aromatic oils of rosemary and lavender evolved as a defence against browsing animals. Floral scents have developed side by side with the evolution of pollinators, such as hirds, bees, and flies, upon which plants depend for reproduction. The scents produced by plants is quite specific: sweetly-scented flowers attract becs, which are after nectar, whereas flowers pollinated by flies develop a different range of often pungent smells.

True, winter may bring fewer flowers, hut many of them are strongly scented, to attract the fewer pollinators around. Their colours are often pale and subtle, revelling instead in surprising shapes and haunting scents.

The white flowers of sarcococca are unassuming, and its evergreen foliage is without much interest, but its scent would rival anything you could huy in a bottle. S hookeriana var dygina is the best, and makes good under-planting for large shrubs, being shade-loving and tolerant of dry conditions. White and shades of pink distinguish the shrubby, scented,

winter-flowering boneysuckles. Lonicera fragrantissima and L standishii hide their flowers under their semi-evergreen leaves; L x purpusii, heing fully deciduous, displays its clusters of creamy flowers on naked stems, but is equally fragrant. Abeliophyllum distichum is smothered with ivory-white flowers in Fehruary, it needs a sunny, sheltered spot to capture

its strong scent. The effect is that of a white forsythia with a For sheer length of flowering and scent, it would be hard to beat Viburum x bodnuntense 'Dawn', flowering from October to March and filling the air with deliciously scented, rosy-

pink flowers on bare branches. Even a small sprig, brought indoors, fills the room with exquisite fragrance. Vxb 'Deben', with pure white flowers, equals it for fragrance. Flowering later in winter and into spring, Daphne mezereum is without rival. An upright and deciduous shrub, it is smothered in deep pink and purple flowers of intense fragrance. Daphne odora 'Aureomarginata' is as fragrant,

though less showy, with deep-pink-and-white flowers, and

glossy evergreen leaves edged with yellow. Pink, purple and white are predominant in the winter garden, but yellows can be found to sharpen up colour schemes and add warmth. During mild spells in late winter. Azara microphylla's clusters of deep yellow flowers release a strong fragrance of vanilla. It has a rather tender disposition, but is worth a try against a south-facing wall, with its favourite moisture-

Chimonanthus praecox, the wintersweet, also needs a sunny spot, though it prefers a drier and poorer soil than the azara. pensive perfumes in fancy bottles.

Winter-flowering plants can produce some of the This is a lovely, hardy shrub, but is for patient gardeners only, as it takes some years to flower. When it is mature, yellow waxy flowers hang from hare branches, so pale that you can almost see through to the purple centres. It is highly fragrant, flowering from December to March, with a sweet, spicy scent which will fill the whole house if it is planted near an open window. The variety 'Luteus' has larger flowers, with a stronger, lemon-yellow colouring, hut less scent.

Enhance the colouring of the ordinary wintersweet by associating it with a fragrant mahonia. The best scented variety is M japonica, flowering from December to March, with long, yellow racemes and a lily-of-the-valley fragrance.

To spice up these golds and pale yellows, touches of orange or bronze can be found among the witch-hazels. Strands of



Above, Daphne adora 'Aureomarginata'; left, Sarcococca hookeriana

coppery-orange Hamamelis x intermedia 'Jelena', and the reddish-brown 'Diane', produce a heady scent, looking especially good against evergreens. Hamamelis mollis, the common witchhazel, is well known for its golden-yellow flowers, as is H 'Pallida', a magnificent, sulphur-yellow variety.

It is surprising, also, how many low, ground-covering plants flowering in winter are scented - such as crocuses, cyclamen, sweet violets, primulas and dwarf iris.

In the garden, fragrance can be found packaged in all sorts of natural shapes, colours and sizes. Even in the depths of winter, you can enjoy floral scents without resorting to ex-

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YOUR PRACTICAL GUIDE TO HOLIDAYS

CUTTINGS

"Can you tell me whether planting a wisteria in a large container, such as a half barrel, is likely to be successful?" The question was asked earlier this year by Caroline Benwell of Herne Hill, south London and, never having done it myself, I asked for verdicts from those who had.

"Yes," says Kurt Iwnicki of Caerleon, Gwent, who has been growing one for 15 years in a cast-iron wash-boiler, "the kind of thing that used to be in the scullery of every old house. I grow the wisteria as a bush on a short leg and prune it twice a year - in summer and in February. It flowers well and so far shows no ill-effects from its confinement, but it must not be allowed to become dry. It gets a heavy topdressing of garden compost each spring-Because frost has damaged the expanding flower buds some years recently, I now wrap a piece of fleece over the top al night at the crucial time. There is a good historical precedent for growing wisterias in containers. They

are mentioned growing this way in The Tale of Genji, written by Lady Muraski Shikibu around AD1000."

"Yes," says Peter Strevens, of Cardiff, who planted a wisteria in a plastic dustbin in 1980. The hin is about 21in tall and 18in in diameter and the tree is now about 3ft tall. "It has grown steadily with flowers ever since. I have tramed it to resemble a small parasol, essentially because I have a tiny back garden; and didn't want it to spread too much. The thrill I get from seeing those elegant pendants at blossom time takes some beating. Last season, during a very high wind, one of the curving branches snapped off, so I had to bandage the two ends together."

The verdict seems to be favourable. Two seedlings and 30 seeds of an

ancient pine, discovered three years ago in the Wollemi National Park in New South Wales, have left Australia for the first time in 200 million years. They have been sent to the Royal

Botanic Gardens, Kew, where the seeds will be kept at a temperature of -20°C in Kew's millennium seed bank. Scientists say that it should remain viable for more than 200 years.

An Etesia ride-on mower is among the things that the garden designer Dan Pearson has chosen for the Conran Foundation Collection to represent good design this year at the Design Museum, London, Mr Pearson had a budget of £27,000 to spend on the things that for him represent design perfection: hats by Crissij van den Munckhof, a MHWay rucksack and a Sony Camcorder are other choices. The exhibition of the Foundation Collection, which opened this month, runs until the beginning of March. The Design Museum at Shad Thames, London SE1 2YD is open Monday to Friday, 11.30am-opni, and weekends, 12pm-6pm, Admission £5.

Metal-guzzling trees for a clean, green future

The green implications of planting willows may run deep: research suggests that these scrub plants can be used as natural decontaminators on polluted land. Daniel Butler reports.

Housing is the higgest threat to Britain's countryside. Because of the growth in single occupancy and our increased lifespan, we will need up to 4.4 million new homes by 2016. Where will we put them? Thanks to a legacy of industrial pollution, urhan sites are in short supply, but new research suggests that help may come from an unlikely source: urban woodland.

According to Dr Nicholas Dickinsoo of Liverpool John Moores University. fast-growing scrub "weeds" such as willow and bircb can act as natural decontaminators. Backed by the National Urban Forestry Unit, local authorities and private iodustry, he has put together a research proposal to monitor the ability of trees to absorb pollutants on 15 contaminated sites around the Black Country.

If his theories prove justified, the implications are certainly exciting. Our industrial heritage has polluted much of the vacant land io and around our cities with heavy metals such as lead, zinc and cadmium, even low levels of which make a site unsuitable for agriculture or development. Convectional remediation techniques are difficult and uosatisfactory; they are also expensive. As a result many of Britain's cities contaio areas that have lain unused for decades, or even of both."

recognised as a cheap alternative to treatment (the most elaborate scheme rarely exceeds £3,000 per acre). Uotil 20 years ago this tended to be purely cosmetic, designed to hide slag heaps or factory sites, but then trees begao to be valued for stabilising potentially dangerous soil. This is because fallen leaves iocrease the soil humus and tree roots absorb water, both of which reduce pollutants leaching out into surrounding

Now Dr Dickinson's preliminary research suggests that they can do much more. The underlying theory is oothing new - scientists have known for some time about "hyperaccumulators" (plants such as the cahbage family, that cao absorb high levels of pollutants), but so far these have had limited practical applications. Even though some can absorb up to 1,000 parts per million (ppm), the problem is that they are usually slow growing, and there is the problem of subsequent disposal. So research has concentrated on translocating genes from hyperaccumulators into more marketable crops. Dr Dickinsoo believes this may well prove to be impracticable: "If it were as easy to put the geoe from one plant into another as some make out. we'd have had wheat with its own nitrogen-fixing roots long ago," he points out.

Instead he has concentrated on willow: "The beauty of this species is that it hybridises really easily," be says. "This means that if ooe type is very pollution toleraot, while another is high yielding, you can cross them to get the best

The results so far are encouraging, Cadmium.

Planting frees on such sites has long been for example, is one of the worst pollutants, rendering land unsuitable for agriculture at just 3 ppm. Taking soil containing cadmium at 6-8 ppm. Dr Harrison's team found a remarkable improvement: "Our trials suggest willows could more than halve the level in 16 years." he says. Io contrast, it would take 80 years to achieve a reduction of just 10 per cent, if the land were left to recover on its own. They are less successful in clearing zinc and lead. Dr Harrison admits, "But that's because zine is found in much higher concentrations and lead is much more stable, therefore difficult to extract.

Although further research is needed on the risk of creating new problems, so far these look relatively insignificant. The most serious danger to date seems to be that as the soil improves. so worms may eat the heavy metals that are released. These could then move up the food chain into blackbirds, for example. "But in practice we think there's no real danger," says Dr Dickinson. "Blackbirds prefer woodland edges and open ground - aod so by planting trees on contaminated ground we're actually reducing their cootact with the pollution."

If Dr Harrison's trials go according to plan. urban trees could play a major part in improving our cities and in protecting the Green Belt. Certainly he believes that coppicing has the potential to be used widely in the near future. Not only would it give value to land that is currently worthless; it would also reduce the legal risks for developments in neighbouring areas, and produce a valuable crop. Who knows, it could also add a new - and more welcome - meaning to the phrase "urban jungle".



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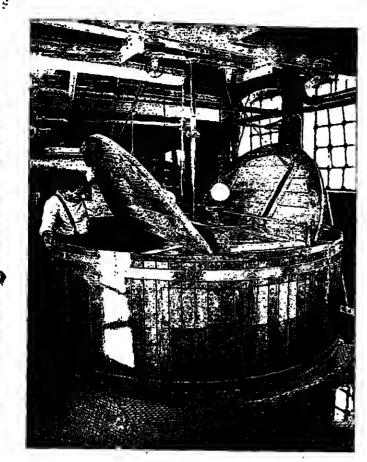
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These men have the bottle to challenge beer taxes



A rural rebellion is taking place among the drinking classes. Richard D North reports.

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ig reconstitution in

This isn't exactly the Peasants' Revolt, and the affluent master brewer Stewart Neame of Shepherd Neame, Faversham, hardly hrings the socialist John Ball - "the Mad Priest" - to mind. Still, six centuries after Wat Tyler got the countrymen of Kent to march on London, Mr Neame - who may go down as the Mad Brewer for his pains ~ is leading a yeoman recellion which may benefit the beer drinkers. They'll be paying more for some of their ale, it's true but it'll more likely be decent English beer in a decent local.

The cause is popular among fellow members of the Independent Family Brewers of Britain (IFBB). The Hook Norton brewcry, near Banhury, owned for five generauous by one family, and perhaps the most picturesque in the country, is amongst many helping to fund it.

Mr Neame's revolt will surface in the High Court on 17 and 18 December, when

challenge the Government's declared intention to raise the duty on beer and wine by 3 per cent, in line with inflation, due to ly increased the differential between French liquor duty and ours.

Rural Kent was always only a semidetached part of the South-east, and never leagues mostly manage to keep the wolf shared all its affluence. At least though, even that is proving a drawback. At first uct is fashionable, and they have developed glance, the "crime" Mr Neame is coming about looks victimless. Middle-income Britain piles into its Volvo estates to of them own pubs, too. "I'm just an empick up pre-Christmas wine bargains in battled husinessman who is losing one quar-Calais, and lesser mortals are nipping ter of my pub trade to the French," says of French lager. There is, of course, some-comes from Calais. Everyone has a stock thing absurd, let alone unecological, about hordes of people driving miles - many of a tives give me French stuff at barbecues." them heavily laden - to milk a hureaucratic He says 45 of his pubs have had to close nonsense. But most people feel they are getting something for nothing, and cry "live la differential!" with the rest.

The cheapness of French beer has at-

murder hy shooting in Dover. Young dolescrounging "runners" from Merseyside. Clydeside and Tyneside import a new come in on 1 January 1998. It is the latest criminality from inner cities, as well as handof a series of taxation blows that have vast-rolling tobacco, and bootleg beer, in white vans from Calais.

The wider crime is economic, claims the trade. Mr Neame's mostly rural brewing colfrom the door: their sometimes murky, ofit had the economic hum of Dover, but now ten gutsy and nearly always gasless prodexport markets. But they argue that their over in the Mondeo for tubby little bottles Mr Neame. "In Kent one pint in three of French beer in their garage. Even my relhecause of the differential, though he has bought others to replace them.

Hook Norton, up in north Oxfordshire. where the loss is claimed to be more like tracted real crime as well, however. Two one pint in 20, shares the complaint. he uses the judicial review process to men currently face charges for attempted. James Clarke, the firm's 2n-year-old "sec-

ond brewer" to his MD and chief brewer father, David, says: "Our production peaked in 1993 and has seen a slight decline since then. We think the duty differential must have something to do with it." The firm still uses an ancient steam engine for most of its power. In other areas, though, there has been some modernisation stainless steel came in to supplement older wooden vats (or "tuns"), during the post-Seventies, and now halted, expansion.

Only the most imaginative pub-keeping. such as practised in their Butcher's Arms ry nights and a chintzier feel than of old, keeps Hook Norton's inn-keepers husy. Its new style is part of a wider trend. The Wellington pub, in Wellington, Herefordshire, typifies the best of it a moribund Edwardian pub, it has since July been newly themed as a restaurant-pub more rusticlooking than a Country Living cover. Village people have been flocking in droves. Spit and sawdust is no longer attractive.

even to dedicated country-lovers. But such pubs have to contend everywhere with cut-price booze. It was one thing to see their trade suppressed by the high

duties which for decades made pubs and off-licences a Treasury milch-cow. At least then, no one could escape the imposts. But the UK signed up to Maastricht and the Single Market was introduced in 1993, New rules came in which, in effect, allowed anyone to bring in almost any quantity of beer, wine and spirits provided it was for personal or family use (including large get-togethers such as weddings). Mr Neame says that at this point, harmonisation of duties became crucial.

imum duty, and that was low," he says. "I'm saying the Treaty of Rome makes it illegal already out of line, and shouldn't be made more so."

"Even though the French doubled their excise rate last year, it is a sixth of Britain's. However, the trade isn't arguing for equalising duty. We need to set in train a downward trend in British duties," says Peter Lewis, director of the Winc and Spirit Association. "We just do not know how much excise must be reduced to make it

no longer viable to go across to Calais, but let's have a programme which would halve the duty differential within five years, and travel along that path until the crossborder shopping eases, and then hold it

The beer trade, and in particular the pub trade, had for years been perceived as a mature industry which videos, drinkdriving laws, and the death of working-class culture had put into decline anyway. But it is at least an overwhelmingly British sec-"The Government claims that a 1992 tor of the economy. The Brewers and Licensed Relabers Association suggested if countries must only agree to impose a min- a memorandum to the Treasury this July that Britain's economy and tax revenues are damaged far more by the present differto make a bad matter worse; our duty is entials than they would be by a reduced rate of duty. The figures are, of course, vehemently disputed, with Customs and Excise replying that high taxation makes good health as well as economic sense. The Treasury's settled view will be available to ministers by the end of the year, following a consultation process and review. For now, and in court next week the line is likely to he repeated, the Government insists that its right to levy taxation is paramount.

Why this year is a fallow time for deer

For anybody involved with the management of deer, a persistent aggravation is the way the price of venison fluctuates wildly from one year to the next.

At present, in the south of England, the going rate for fallow deer is 90p per pound for whole carcases - with head and cutting the appetite for Scottish feet off, but the skin still on and for roe, generally considered the finest meat, £1,20. Yet these amounts are more than 50 per cent down on last year's, and in the Highlands the price of the ubiquitous red deer has crashed from the 1996 high of £2 per pound to a wretched 60p. On hig estates, which depend largely on venison sales for income. this amounts to a damaging loss.

External events, apparently unconnected, often have a strong influence on the market for deer meat. Worst of all, in recent memory, was the nuclear disaster at Chemobyl in April 1986, which spread radioactive debris over much of northern Europe and put the fear of God into the West Germans - nor-

This drastically reduced demand for all venison and knocked prices down to a new low.

Another sharp fall was caused, paradoxically, by the collapse of Communism in and after 1989. When the Iron Curtain at last came down, a flood of Polish and East German venison poured into West Germany, swamping the market there and, in a knock-on effect, imports.

Last year saw a record price surge, partly because of the scare about BSE, which turned a good many people from beef to venison; another factor was that imports from New Zealand temporarily dried up, because deer farmers there were consolidating their breeding stock and culling fewer beasts than

The result was a dramatic rise not only in prices, but also in poaching. All over Britain, from Cornwall to Caithness, gangs were out at night with lamps, rifles, shotguns and lurchers; with a red deer hind (for instance) suddenly worth nearly £200, they made instant fortunes. In Mortimer Forest, near

were killed illegally, and this wirter stocks are so depleted that the Forestry Commission has reduced its projected annual cull by three-quarters. The peachers. being indiscriminate, have, of course, wrecked long-term plans

DUFF HART-DAVIS

for managing the herd, besides losing wounded animals in the

Outside factors thus drive venison prices to some extent, hut the truth is that the home market has never been effectively developed. Wild venison is almost fat-free, and entirely uncontaminated by artificial foodsruffs; yet sales in the United Kingdom remain relatively small, and prohably oil per cent of the country's output still goes abroad, principally to Germany.

A courageous attempt to increase home consumption was made by Highland Venisun.

who joined forces with the Safeway supermarket chain to promore sales in this country. Instead of sending whole carcases abroad, as most Scottish dealers do, the firm began cutting and packaging venison like other meat, and made some headway. Then funds ran short, and the company was sold and has now been taken over by a Danish firm, so that

export is likely to become its

Attempts to increase home

main business once again.

sales of game in general are being made by the Game Marketing Evecutive, which was set un last year with lunds from the Ministry of Agriculture and the Countryside Business Group, By talking to supermarkets, by training chefs and organising a Chef of the Year competition for game cookery, the executive reckons it is making progress. The UK market for game, about £17m in 1992 is now thought to be worth £34m, and is expected to rise to E5om by 2002 as

possibilities on offer. At present the venison sold

comes from farms that can guarantee more consistency than dealers in wild deer; farmed animals are killed relatively young. whereas a stag shot in the Highlands may have been scrambling up and down precipitous slopes for eight or 10 years, and may. if not treated well, turn out as tough as old boots.

There is no doubt that in the past much Scottish venison has been poorly handled. A carcase often bas to be dragged off the hill, through peat bogs and thousded burns, before it reaches a vehicle or a pony. It may then spend several days hanging in an inadequately chilled larder before being collected. In spite of alt-round im-

provements recently, the probtem with wild venison. particularly in England, remains that there is no central marketing organisation: instead, there are hundreds of individual sellers, who make life difficult for themselves by refusing to club together.

people in search of healthy If they did, they might secure better prices - and cerfood become more aware of the tainly it is galling for them to see what a mark-up butchers by supermarket chains such as make. At present a fallow car-

mally the greatest consumers. Ludlow at least 100 fallow deer a co-operative of forest owners. Sainsbury and Waitrosc all case, weighing 70lb in the skin, dle -8lb at £4.50, ie £36 - and ened ban on beef on the bone Christmas, the butcher will have no difficulty selling each Illb haunch at £4 a pound, so that the haunches alone bring him £88. He then has the sad-

fetches only £63 for the a dozen pounds of stewing will drive venison prices up landowner, in the run-up to steak off the forequarters and again. So far there is no sign of neck, at £1.50; total £18. His return on the beast is thus £142. well over 100 per cent.

> Still, that's trade. The question, now, is whether the threat- there were no tomorrow.

any upward movement - and for the time being people in our part of the world are snapping up bony joints of red beef as though

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NATURE NOTE

Alarm calls form an important element in wild creatures, defences, and it is fascinating to find how often one species warns another of danger. A woodpigeon, for instance, can perfectly well leave a tree silently, but when it departs pigeons, rooks, crows, pheasants and teet that kind of prowler, and a cock

others get immediate notice that something unpleasant is in the offing.

Blackbirds moh owls with high. hysterical twittering, but switch to a low "tuk, tuk" whenever they see a ground predator such as a fux, cat or stoat. Wrens tick like alarm clocks if they de-

pheasant which persists in giving off - or seem danger, and the alarm call of single calls has almost certainly spot- a fallow doe, for example, will comted a fox. Jays, on the other hand, screech indiscriminately at all enemies. Humans, in other words, can glean whether grounded or airborne.

Male deer generally remain silent. except during the annual rot; but temales give hourse barks when they see

municate itself to a roe or a munitise. much information about events in the countryside purely by listening.

Duff Hart-Davis

Fiddly, absorbing and very rewarding. That was the verdict on a mosaic-making course, as Sally Stoples found out.

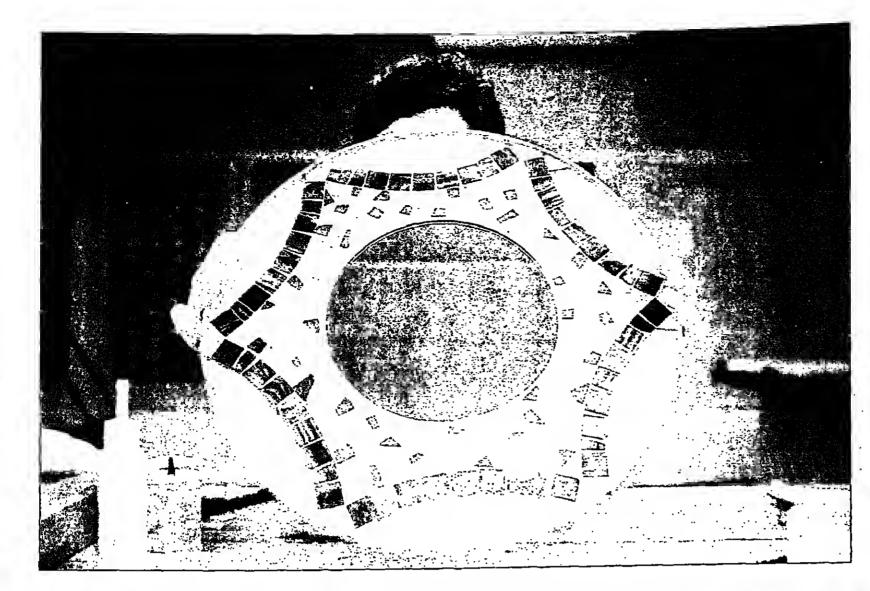
Mosaics keep Michelle Heydon awake at night. Since she tried a two-day course in the art of cutting up tiny pieces of tiles and arranging them into intricate patterns, she spends sleeptess hours planning her designs, and has seriously considered chang-

Michelle, who works with computers in Cambridge, longs to give it all up and earn her living making mosaics. "It's my aspiration. I like all sorts of craft, but I really love the idea of doing something that will be here in years to come," she says.

She is sitting at a table in a large, airy studio in Sussex attending a four-day course in mosaics run by West Dean College. In front of ber is a 4ft by 2ft wooden frame for a bedhead, displaying an elaborate design of flowers, stems and leaves. She is planning the painstaking joh of filling in the design with tiny pieces of mosaic.

"It's taken me three days just to do one corner. It's a hig project, but I'll take it home and keep at it until I've finished," she says, "I'm a full-time working mother and this is my escape. I'm planning hrown and yellow lillies, cream tulips, a terracotta background and black stems. This is my second course. After the first one I got so carried

āway, I bought £70 worth of glass," All around her other men and women are busy working on more modest mosaics in ceramics, glass, marble and terracotta. Monty Rapbael, from London, a retired husmessman turned psychotherapist, says that what he enjoys most about the process is breaking a material up into fragments in order to rebuild it into something whole.



of the mosaics I saw in Italy and Cyprus. The richness captured me. I had been groping around to find some sort of craft ... Then I came on a mosaic course and decided this was it."

Monty is working from a photograph, copying a 16th-century mosaic he admired ontside a church in Crete, "I find it unquestionably therapeutic, I don't know what meditation is, hnt I imagine it to be rather like making a mosaic. It is so absorbing that after a certain time you forget everything

The college at West Dean is, in fact, a splendidly preserved Edwardian house set

their stay students may wander the huge rooms, use the library and admire the pictures, antiques and big game trophies.

Sophic Mackinnon, who is on the mosaic course with her sister-in-law Fiona, is full of enthusiasm. "I'll definitely be buck. The atmosphere here is so relaxing - and I've discovered it takes the most incredible concentration. I've decided that one day I'd like to do my kitchen floor in black and white lizards."

Sophie and Fiona are designing musaic patterns around a circular mirror, exploring patterns and colours with glass and cer-"Originally I was attracted by the colour in 6,000 acres. It offers a number of full- amic pieces. Fiona, a nursing sister, said she surface. "I needed a hit of advice on what bridge, tried mesaics after enjoying a number is 01594 530214 or 01291 689463.

time and short residential courses. During had previously had no idea how much time colour the grouting should be," she says it would take, or how absorbing it would It comes in black, white or grey and be, "It's so peaceful and undemanding not a bit like work. And yet there is something growing in front of you. It's great fun being able to try different materials and colours, and getting such helpful advice."

Also designing a mirror surround is Stephanie Schofield, who used to work in me a sense of power," he says, as he demonbanking in Surrey, and her lawyer husband Brian. Both had been interested in classical mosaics and decided to have a go themselves. Stephanic began by decorating a realise just what those workmen must 6-in-square tile, to get the feel of cutting. sticking and linen grouting to give an even

whichever you choose makes a huge difference to the overall finish.

Brian is bappy to leave the more ambinous mirror to his wife, and contents himself with working on a selection of tiles. "I rather enjoy using the ule nippers. It gives strates how to cut a 1-in-square tile into 16 uny squares. "Having done this yourself, you look again at the classical patterns and have gone through."

Tiny tiles: mosaic work is 'unquestionably therapeutic'. according to students at West Dean College in Sussex Photograph: Andrew Hassan

course on stained glass. "I wanted to do a mosaic for a set of paving slabs in the garden," be said. "The mtor here, Emma Bigge, is absolutely terrific, and she has brought old bits and pieces of tiles and pebbles as well as some expensive cut marble. She has put up an exhibition of her work, which is very inspiring."

Emma herself says many of her students bave no experience of any other craft. "I get all ages on the courses, and tremendous enthusiasm for mosaics from both men and women. When they start, they find the technique takes over and they are so busy cutting and sticking and arranging that they have no time to question their own creativity. The results are often very encouraging. I find that men tend to be more geometric in their designs, and women more naturalistic."

Emma was originally inspired by watching a TV programme about mosaicists in the Italian community. She took up her calling with enthusiasm and has since won commissions from the Sultan of Oman, and Terence Conran, for his London restaurants Quaglinos and Mezzo, She has also just completed a mosaic at the entrance to The Groucho, the artists' and writers' cinh in

Emma Bigge takes courses at West Dean College, Went Dean, Chichester, West Sussex. PO18 OQZ (01243 811301). A four-day residential course costs £222 (£143 for nonresidents). She also seaches at Missendon Abbey: Great Missenden, Bucks (01494 890296) and runs her own mosaic workshop at Unit B, 4131449 Holloway Road, London N7 (0171-263 2997).

On 29 November the feature on silk painting at the Wye Valley Arts Centre contained John Ball. a retired lecturer from Cam- n mistaken telephone number. The correct

GAMES

BAWN O'BEIRNE RANELAGH DON'T JUNK IT - USE IT

Some months ago, I explained how to make a see-through bread bin out of two plastic water containers. At the time I warned against attempting to use the object for those Gallic extravagances known as French sucks, hut for those who persist in huying ectomorphic loaves, bere is the solution: the telescopic bread bottle.

Start with two or three two-litre plastic drink bottles. Drink the drink and wash and dry the bottles. If you have shopped carefully, you will find that you have bottles of slightly varying diameters.

Take the widest of the hottles and slice it in half at its middle. Then cut the central

sections from the other bottles, discarding the top and bottom.

If you bave judged matters well, you will now be able to assemble an extendable hread container, with the top and bottom of the first bottle joined by sections from the others. And the sections will slide, trombone-like, to fit the bread perfectly.

GAME OF THE WEEK WILLIAM HARTSTON

James, eight, tells me that I am going to have to put in some practice. He's been practising a good deal and he is heating me too easily. The game is Tumble Bugs and it is both amusing and unbelievably vicious. ("Tumble Bugs, Lose Your Friends," says the press release.

What makes this game different from other shooting-down-spaceship video games is the elever 3D graphics which allow a simulation of rocky terrain (you can choose from a variety of planets to fight on, and a range of spaceships with different powers. What makes it even more different is that it's not made by a games company, but a rather serious company called Voxar that specialises in graphics for medical and scientific applications.

They invented Tumble Bugs as a demonstration of the capabilities of their new graphical software. but the game was so well received that they decided to market it. At present it is available only over the Internet, on CD-Rom (playable on Windows 95 Pentium! for £15. You can buy it or download a fully playable demo at: www.tumblebugs.com

You can play solo (against the computer) or one against one (on the same keyboard) Must go now. I've got some practising to do.

PANDORA MELLY GAMES PEOPLE PLAY

John Julius Norwich, 68, writer and

My game is collecting literary snippets: anything in writing that takes my fancy. It may be funny, or moving, or extraordinary; a short po paragraph of dazzling prose, something I've read on the hack of a hotel room door or the synopsis of an opera. Absolutely anything: all is grist to the

It began in 1958 when I joined the Foreign Service and was sent to Beirut, which in those days was a sort of Clapham Junction of the world's airlines. Anybody who flew to the east came down in Beirut.

Many exciting people came to the house, and one Christmas my mother gave me a beautiful visitor's book hound in goatskin for when people came to dinner or stayed overnight. Alas, the moment I unwrapped it, a curfew was declared, and absolutely nobody arrived for the next 10

months, which was a great disappointment. One day I remembered that I had a little collection of things on rough hits of paper in various suitcases, and I decided to copy out

everything in my very best handwriting, and have a commonplace book instead.

By the late Sixties, what had started as a few scraps became a Collection with a capital C. I'd assembled about three or four albumfuls, which I anthology. The "come up and see my etchings" syndrome - it's no fun having a collection if you can't share it.

Every year since 1970, I've put together a collection of bits out of the alhums and published it as A Christmas Cracker, which I send round to my friends.

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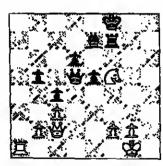
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But the Bear Bear Be.

The only expense of this slightly ridiculous hobby is every five or six years when I buy myself a new, very beautiful book bound in goatskin, which I think is cheap at the price.

The 1997 edition of John Julius Norwich's '.4 Christmas Cracker' is available from Heywood Hill booksellers at 10 Curzon Street, London W7 (0171-629-0647), price £4.50. Earlier compilations, 'Christmas Crackers' and 'More Christmas Crackers' (Penguin, £10.99), can be found at most good bookshops and quite a lot of bad ones.

CHESS: WILLIAM HARTSTON



To begin with the best bit, it's White to play and win in the diagram position, which comes from Adams-Georgadze, played on Thursday in the second round of the world championship in Groningen in the Netberlands. Adams finished it off beautifully with 1.Qd2!! when I...Qxd2 allows 2.Ra8+ Bd8 3.Rxd8 mate. Instead Georgadze played I...Qc6, hut after 2.Qh6+ Ke8 3.Qe6 he resigned. There is nothing to be done about the threats of 4.Ra7 or 4.Nxd6+ Qxd6

5.Ra8+. So Adams needs only a draw in the second game to go through to the third round. The other two British players in the competition both drew the first games of their second-round matches, Sadler as Black against Ehlvest, and Short as White against Korchnoi.

Meanwhile, two of the favourites were having very different experiences. Anand won an impressive game against Nikolic, hut just look at what happened to Vassily Ivanchuk:

White: Yasser Seirawan Black: Vassily Ivanchuk 1 d4 Nf6 12 Oh6 Ndc5 13 RdI Ob6 2 c4 g6 3 Nc3 Bg7 14 BbI Ke7 15 f4 exf4 5 Bd3 e5 16 Rf1 Rf8

6 d5 a5 17 Oxf4 f6 7 Nge2 Na6 18 dxc6 Oxc6 8 £3 Nd7 19 Nd4 Qe8 9 Be3 Bb6 20 Nd5+ Kd8 10 Qd2 Bxe3 21 Qxd6 Bd7 11 Qxe3 c6 22 Nb5 resigns

Black's plan of exchanging bis black-squared bishop with 9...Bb6 (when 10.Bxh6 is met by Qh4+) was all very well. hut he began to miss the piece rather badly when his d-pawn needed a defender. Anand's finish was very

Qe2+ 38.Kh3 Qf1+ 39.Kg4 h5+ 40.Kg5 Bf6 is mate.

powerful. At the end, 37.Kg2

White: Predrag Nikolic Black: Viswanathan Anand 1 d4 d5 20 Rc4 axb4 2 c4 c6 21 axb4 Rdb8 3 Nc3 Nf6 22 e4 Nc7 4 Nf3 e6 23 Rfc1 Nb5 5 Bg5 h6 24 Nde5 Rd8 6 Bxf6 Qxf6 25 Nxc6 Bxc6 7 e3 Nd7 26 Rxc6 Ra3 8 Bd3 dxc4 27 Qc4 Nxd4 9 Bxc4 g6 28 Nxd4 Rxd4 10 0-0 Bg7 29 Rc8+ Kh7

11 b4 0-0 30 Qc6 Rd2 12 Rc I Qe7 31 Rc7 Qd8 13 Qh3 Nb6 32 g3 Rf3 14 Bd3 Rd8 33 Rf1 Rdxf2 15 Ne4 Nd5 34 Rxf2 Qd1+ 16 a3 Bd7 35 Kg2 Rxf2+ 36 Kxf2 Bd4+ 17 Nc5 Be8 18 Bb1 b6 White resigned 19 Nd3 a5

CONCISE CROSSWORD



ACROSS

Place for mooring (5) Stupefy (4)
Large primate (7)
House (5)

(4) Consumes (4) Sewn (8) Boxing category (13) Intimidate (8) 17 Sprain (4)

20 Decree (51 21 Deadlock (7) 22 Remainder (4) 23 Fielding position (5)

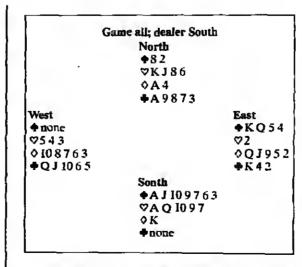
Priest's headgear (7) Part in play (4) Tragic (13) Enthusiast (7) Nothing (coll.) (5) Fit of fever (4) Outlaw (6)

Legendary (6) 13 Natural environment (7) 14 Contradict (7) 16 Oily fruit (5) 18 Structural member of 19 Gemstone (4)

Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword:

ACROSS: 1 Knickers, 5 Hear (Nicosia), 9 Ahead, 10 Cobbage, 11 Sales pitch, 14 Cash registers, 16 Silhouette, 20 Martini, 21 Dino, 22 Nude, 23 Esteemed, DOWN: 1 Knapsack, 2 Idealist, 3 Kudos, 4 Rocking chairs, 6 Exam, 7 Reel, 8 Abacus, 12 Teelotum, 13 Asseroid, 15 Raisin, 17 Undue, 18 Amen, 19 Arid.

BRIDGE: ALAN HIRON



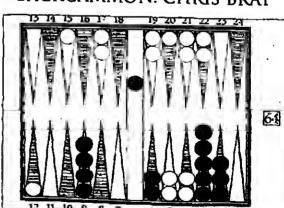
More disasters are attributable to "basty play to the first trick" than to anything else. Here, for a change, it was basty play to the second trick that was South's undoing. South opened 1 . North responded 2 and South rebid 2 ?. They were apparently forcing to game, so North could agree trumps with a simple raise to 3 . A welter of cue-bids followed and it hecame clear to South that the partnership held everything it needed except ♠K. Against the final contract of 6 ?, West led the ♣Q

to dummy's ace. Without deep thought. South noted the solidarity of his trump suit and decided to play on cross-ruff lines. His plan was simple: he would cash the ace of spades and concede a spade. Even when the defenders got in and led a trump, he would then make a spade, two diamonds, a club and eight trump tricks.

He soon discovered the hitch when West ruffed the ace of spades; now there was no way to avoid another loser in spades. Any suggestions?

A better plan, after winning the club, is to play a round of trumps. When both opponents follow, draw the remaining trumps, ending in dummy, and lead 48, running it if not covered. Now declarer is bome however the spades divide. If East holds all four, there is no problem; if West holds all four, a ruffing finesse can be taken; and if the suit divides 3-1, only one ruff is necessary to establish the rest of the spades.

BACKGAMMON: CHRIS BRAY



White has been playing a 4-5 back game and has hit a very early shot. Black bas compounded his problem by staying on the bar and now both sides have a decision to

make. Should White double? Should Black take? Looking at it from White's side it is easy to see that by the time it is his turn to roll again be may well have lost his market: Black will have an easy drop. Any sequence where White makes his 5-point and Black stays on the har (or enters with 14, 24 or 15) will produce a position where Black will have a clear drop. As White will make bis 5-point with all but seven rolls (66, 64, 46, 61, 16, 42, 24) it should be clear that White has a very strong double.

What about the take? What are Black's strengths? His main asset is his lead in the race. Before the roll he leads by 56 points (96-152). In addition, his men on 9-point can still be used to attack White if he leaves a hlot in Black's home board. As noted above, White has seven rolls that don't cover the 5-point. Finally he should recognise that White's army is somewhat split, with 10 men in one half of the board and five in the other - a typical result of playing a back game. It will take him some time to

coordinate his forces to restrain Black's last man. More often than not, Black will drop this double. In the chouette from which the position was taken, all four team mcmbers - none renowned for dropping - passed the box's double. Although Black's position is far from ideal, as often happens in hackgammon the sum of a number of possibilities, each of which is unlikely in itself. is sufficient to give Black enough chances to take. Rollouts confirm that Black has a thin, but correct, take.

المكان الاعل

Wye Valley START Castle Goodrich Hostelrie Hotel Monmouth Huntsham

Kingfishers, castles and trails of the river bank

A walk around the village of Goodrich encompasses more or less everything you might hope to see in the Wye valley: spectacular views, the river, black-and-white Herefordshire houses and a ruined castle.

Catherine Stebbings sets out.

Start at the car park for Goodrich Castle, and walk down the hill towards the village. At the bottom of the hill, turn left towards Welsh Bicknor and Courtfield, It is not long before the gentle climb affords good views of the large Herne Bridge on your left and the village of Goodrich on your right. On reaching a triangular patch of grass, turn right along a quiet country lane and, keeping left, follow the road past a little cottage named Bearwood.

The gradual climh takes you around the edge of Coppet Hill. To the west the little village of Goodrich is easily visible, with its neatly walled churchyard. 14thcentury church and impressive rec-

The little path cuts through the thick covering of hracken and gorse. Much of the walk is laid out in the valley below. You can see the great loop of the river emerging from Symonds Yat and meandering across the plain. From here the patchwork of fields and bedgerows stretches to the mountains in the distance.

The path eventually reaches a little wood of ash and oak. Turn right and follow the gentle descent to the river. At this point you should be able to see the three counties of Gloucestershire, Herefordshire and Monmouthshire, To the east is the Forest of Dean, whose massive oak trees were originally grown for making ships in the 18th century. You will see the old coal-mining villages of the forest; Ruardean, Lydbrook and Dryhrook. To the south west is Symonds Yat, with its backdrop of woodland and dramatic rocky outcrops that have challenged many a climber.

Continue down the path into the wood that clings to the side of the hill. Sycamores give way to a dense covering of coppiced hazel, gnarled silver birch and dark green yews. Among the undergrowth of bramhles and hracken are scatterings of wild marjoram, euphorbia and dog's mercury. The woods are inhabited by foxes, badgers, rabbits, squirrels, and roe and fallow

Climb over the stile at the bottom of the hill, and you are in the lush green water meadows that lie alongside the river Wye. Go down to the water's edge and turn right so that you are walking downstream. Looking across the river end straight up, there is a steep rock where a pair of peregrine falcons successfully raised their young this year. The peregrine's dramatic diving stoops can exceed 125mph.

When the river is not full of canoeists testing their strength against the flow, you may be lucky enough to see an otter of a kingfisher. You will certainly see and hear the ducks and swans that enjoy the river.

This stretch of river is lined with mature willow and alder trees. The rich pasture is grazed by sheep and cows, and the odd heron can be seen flying across the water meadow. The footpath takes you through a gate and a beech wood before re-emerging in the meadow and coming to an end. If you look up towards Coppet Hill, you will see the image of a white fox painted on the rock above.

Walk towards the right-hand corner of the field, where a lovely old walnut tree stands before a castellated farm house. Follow the footpath through the farmyard and past paddocks of Arabian horses and miniature Shetland ponies. When you reach the busy road turn right, and after about 200 yards cross the road. Go through the kissing-gate and walk across the fields, following the marked path over a stile, through a gate and along a dark lane to Goodrich.

Turning left at the road you will come to the black-and-white-timbered former courtbouse. Turn right and follow signs to the

church. The mellow, pinkish stone and simple spire belie the grandeur of the linenfold-panelled walls inside, which were hrought here from Goodrich Court when it was demolished in 1950. (The church is often locked; key available from the village shop). It is a pleasant church, hut not spectacular, and many points of interest such as the perpendicular east window - can be admired from outside. There is a stone seat in the churchyard for tired, contemplative walkers.

Take the north-western gate out of the churchyard, walk up the track and turn right at the top. Turn left at an old farm building into the field ahead; don't follow the footpath sign. Follow the muddy track right and aim for the avenue of lime trees in the distance, Once a pleasant drive to Goodrich Court, this is now a picturesque campsite with one permanent resident, who lives in a much loved gypsy caravan. Walk up the avenue, turning right at the road which takes you into the village past the old jail and The Hostelrie hotel. A little further down the lane is Jollys, the village shop and post office, where jars of barley sugar and humbugs adom the

A little farther down the road turn left up Castle Lane, through the car park and on to Goodrich Castle. This red sandstone ruin is as rugged as the rocks it stands on. Goodrich Castle has it all: a forbidding 12th-century keep, steep spiral stairs, murder boles, dungeons, a massive Norman tower, an elegant chapel and a broad, grassy moat.

Length: about seven miles of easy walking, with gentle climbs and

Goodrich Castle (01345 125436), is five miles from Ross on Wye off the A40. Car park open 10am-6pm daily. Castle open 1 Nov-31 March, Wednesday-Sunday, 10am-4pm. Closed Dec 24-25. Admission: adults £2.30, concessions £1.70, children £1.20.

Map: Ordnance Survey Landranger 162 (1:50,000).

Two wheels good, one wheel better? Minimalism takes to the road

Unicycling is the Everest of the wheeled world. It's hard, and you do it because it's there. It's pointless to ask what the point is. There is none.

If you're not in a circus, riding one is just a cry for attention; if you are in a circus, you're signalling that you want more attention than anyone else, writes Eric Kendall.

Advocates of the unicycle praise its hidden qualities. It shares with the 2CV the

It the balance: unicycle hockey

t be riding one at ail.

nicycle bockey instead?

ishility to harm innocent bystanders or

te rider, by dint of going so slowly. And

lie a jump-jet, it's so hard to operate that

yu must be brilliant and highly trained

Some claim that as a practical propo-

tion round town, a unicycle beats in-line

sates because you're only a loony while

su're on it. Back on your feet, nobody

ed know - you don't have to wear

own's shoes to ride one. You can carry

unicycle easily in one hand, park it in the

orner of a room, pop it into the luggage

ick of a train or bus. So with all this going

or them, why do people choose to play

Well that's what they call it, hut polo

would be nearer the mark. Back in the mists of time, a strange unicyclist made a list of things that would be fiendishly difficult for anyone to do on one wheel: vigperiodically connecting with a rapidly moving hard object (might as well make it a ball), lots of unpredictably wohhling obstacles to negotiate (perhaps in the form of other unicyclists), and a couple of goalshaped nets on which to snag your pedals (could also serve as a target into which to knock the ball). The really odd thing is that he found anyone to join him.

But he did, and the rest is history, albeit on a very small scale - at least in the UK.

It's an amazing sight - a comhination of extreme skill, stop-start rwisting movements, blurs of legs and wheels. and a spirit that underlines just how hard it is. The achievement is to have taken part, not in some woolly-liberal. brotherhood-ofman kind of way.

but literally. Strangely hig in Germany. unicycling is inherently humorous, at least as seen from the sidelines. Riding one. or learning to, is funny in the sense that you may as well laugh rather

than cry. It helps to start on a smooth surface, preferably with a wall next to you and one behind you: you're going to need all the support you can get. Come to think of it, some parallel bars would be ideal - the kind that Kenneth More learnt to walk between on Hokey Cokeys is James (0171-729 5013); tin legs, in Reach for the Sky.

Photograph: Eric Kendall

The first stage, getting aboard, gives a hint of what's to come. Get the unicycle the right way round (there is a difference). Choose your starting foot, place it on the relevant pedal, which should be cocked backwards, towards you, and get the saddle under your backside. The unicycle is currently stuck out in front of you at an angle which is closer to falling over than staying upright, but persevere. As long as cyclists with knobbly tyres.

that other foot is on the deck, you're safe. Now, brace yourself and stand down on the pedal, which pushes the unicycle miraculously towards the vertical and will orous arm movement (preferably with a spit you out over the top if you're not very long stick in one hand, to upset balance), careful. If you start with the pedal in the wrong position, cocked away from you. you bypass this stage completely, going directly to flat on your back in one smooth

> And that's almost all there is to it. In no time at all you'll be demonstrating the sport's greatest misnomer, the "stable position" (pedals horizontal), before moving on to straight lines, stopping, turning (extra pressure on one pedal) and even the "free-mount" (no walls) - at which point you've cracked it. Finally, for the utter nutter, there's the "suicide-mount", definitely in the advanced category, and a sure sign that you're ready, at least psychologically, for the bockey pitch.

Where and what to ride

Lots of hike shops have one unicycle in stock and no idea of how to ride it, but they usually know someone who can. Be deeply suspicious of offers of help from a keen unicyclist - they're probably recruiting for their unicycle hockey team.

A few people find them easy to ride and learn instantly, others don't - it can take weeks. Unicycles cost from around £80 up to £200 or more for a model designed for hockey - they're stronger all round, and have more spokes in the wheels. Try DM Engineering (01202 47t) 943). No good for hockey, or to learn on. a popular "giraffe" model is adjustable between 5ft and 8ft, and makes you stand out from the crowd.

Unicycle hockey teams and circus schools are the most organised areas of unicycling, Contact Oddballs (0171-250 1333), a specialist juggling shop, or circus schools: Circus Space (0171-6134141), or Albert & Friends Instant Circus (0181-741 54711. The Catch (01275 332 655) is a juggling/street theatre/new circus magazine that earries listings including unicyeling. Main contact for the Hackney other hockey teams include the London Loonies, the Hastings Unicycle Group (Hug) and the St Leonard's Unicycle Group (Slug). Rumour has it that someone in Birmingham is trying to start a

There is also a world unicycle convention - and, of course, leaping on to the handwagon and balancing up hill and down dale, there are even mountain uni-

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And the second second Secretary of the second secretary A CONTRACTOR OF THE PROPERTY O



MIKE ROWBOTTOM ON THE REAL AND THE

COUNTERFEIT

I suppose it is a campaign medal really. Of sorts, anyway. Although I can't help but feel that enduring a four-day trip to Rome hardly merits a

There it sits, in its snug greco hox - Dad's Roman coin, as my six-year-old describes it. I served.

"What did you do in the European Athletics Cup of 1993, Daddy?" he asks. "Daddy, did you ever have to kill a man when you were serving in

The idea of the gift, I presume, was to assure the attending representatives of the international written press that they were champions themselves within the worldwide or at least, pan-European Family of Athletics.

to foster, although there is something in it - the world of athletics contains more than enough hickering to make it feel like a real family.

> But the gesture is one that has been made on many occasions at many venues. And every time it feels wrong. Because medals are things you give to athletes or soldiers. What we press boys really want

The Seoul Olympics of 1988 are remembered for many things - the unscheduled "dove incineration" section of the opening ceremony, the scandalous refereeing of the boxing tournament, and the stupendous exposure of the 100-metres champion Ben Johnson as a drugs cheat. If only De Cou-

Now that is a curious image bertin could have lived to wit-

But for many of my colleagues, that Olympics will always he associated with a traumatic moment of revelation that occurred as they entered the press village.

One of their oumber, a flamboyant Brummie with a taste for rainhow-hued Joe 90 specs, had arrived a day earlier and was on hand to offer them this lugubrious greeting: "Welcome to the No-hag Olympics." Effectively, the thing was dead in the water

Four years later, I'm happy to report, Barcelona proved that the concept of the Olympic Games was still vibrant and ongoing through the imaginative

bag contains a quantity of small, shiny items - including a number of lapel badges bearing the name or symbol of the event. These "pins", as

they are known, take on an un-

duration of one's stay. It works

Girl at serving hatch, smiling hopefully: "Have you got any pins?" You: "I'm sorry. I gave away my fast one this morning." Girl starts to look all wistful, but gamely serves you with your food, anyway, her day

spoiled. You feel guilty. The variant goes as follows: Girl at serving hatch. smiling hopefully: "Have you got any pins?" You: "I think I have got one somewhere. Hang had while working. Jack Walk-

smile and fixes it into the glinting array already established on the lapel of her Games volunteer overall.

She then smiles over with a look of quiet triumph to her mate alongside. Who then asks avoidable significance for the you, smiling hopefully: "Have you got any pins? And you say. "I'm sorry. That was my last one." Another quiet triumph. And the second girl looks all wistful and gamely carries on serving food, her day spoiled. You feel guilty.

Basic rule of life for championships: pins are good, but don't run out. Pins good, bags good, coins not good.

Thinking about it, though, a coin was the hest gift I ever on a sec. There you go." Girl er, who bought a controlling in-

fortuoes he underwrites - First Tower United, who play near his tax-haven home on the island of Jersey.

Walker is a man who habitually shuns publicity, but on Jersey itself he is known by a different name - locals call him Johnny Walker - and his attitude to enquiries is similarly

After expressing all the frustration of the one-eyed fan as the team closest to his heart struggled to a goalless draw in an FA Vase tie, he waxed expansive in the little room where club officials and their counterparts from Paultoo Rovers were served with drinks.

It seemed strange to hear a man who had recently sold his piece.

Every major championship accepts hadge with a dazzling terest in Blackburn Rovers in family sheet-metal company geontains a quantity of on the cost of transporting First Tower across to Devon for the replay. "That's another two grand up the spout," he

Afterwards, I was phoning from the lobby for a taxi to take me to the airport - I was being transported by Jersey European Airways (owner: Jack Walker) - when Tower's benefactor came out to wish me a courteous farewell.

As I made my way to the ground entrance, I heard my name called out and turned hack to see the multi-millionaire holding something up hetween his forefinger and thumb. "You doo't want to leave this," he said. It was a 20p

SPORT ON

Getting roped in to rodeo

THE INTERNET

Tomorrow sees the culmination of the 39th annual National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas. The NFR features the top 15 competitors in each of professional

rodeo's seven events:

saddle brone riding, bull riding, hareback riding,

calf roping, team roping.

steer wrestling and bar-

The official site for the National Finals

Rodeo has a special

"greenhorn" section for

those of us who under-

stand little or nothing of the sport. Most of the events are fairly self-ev-

ident, but steer wrestling

and barrel racing require

a bit more explanation.

two people, the hazer and the bulldogger. The

hazer keeps the steer on

course, the bulldogger

wrestles the beast to the

ground. It normally takes

less than four seconds.

Barrel racing is not rac-

ing against little fat peo-

ple, but the only rodeo

competition for cowgirls

and entails racing round

As for bullriding -

could you stay on a

2.000lb bull for more

than eight seconds with

This starts with their

time, I've got get it on

down the road." I'm

sure it sounds much bet-

ter as delivered by Steve

McQueen in Junior Bon-

ner. Here you get links

to the Prescott Frontier

Days Rodeo, the world's

old oil drums.

The former requires

rel racing.

Big-money incentive for winter wave-fest



In the first of a weekly series from Hawaii. where the giant Pacific swells have been made even more explosive by El Niño, Andy Martin (above) eyes the \$50,000 prize-money for the person who rides this winter's biggest wave

Eyeing the 8ft 6in tri-fin board I carried over my shoulder, the baggage inspection woman at Honolulu airport said to me, "You here to shoot for the

"It's as good as in my pocket." I said, slipping back into the local Hawailan dialect, an exaggerated variant of positive thinking. In fact, I had no idea what she was talking about. But it didn't take long to find out.

An hour away at the opposite end of Oahu, the \$50,000 (£30,000) prize-money put up by K2 - a mainland sports accessories company - for whoever rides the higgest wave had hit the North Shore with the force of a isunami. It has become the hot topic all along the 12-mile strip of sand that, for a couple of months every year, becomes the most iotense place on the planet, short of a war zone.

The Hawaiian islands are essectally a boach of wikamour poking up out of the middle of the Pacific. These are mostly extinct, but the seas here remain cruptive. Hawaii hoovers up huge swells, driven by storms thousands of miles away to the north, which smash into the lava rock, trip up, slip over, and transcribe the mightiest liquid geometry in the world, waves the size and ferocity of dinosaurs, that come here to die and don't mind taking a few humans with them.

Winter on the North Shore is always a wave-fest. But this year, with El Nivio adding its touch of hyperbole, the season is liable to see the swell of the century. In most places around the Pacific, people fear the impact of El Niño and see it in terms of nemesis and apoca-



Wave slave: Leading surfer, Michael Ho, emerges from a wave during competition in Hawa

lypse. Not in the upside-down though, where extreme weather is embraced like a saviour.

And this is one reason why K2 have launched their Biggest Wave initiative this year: big suddenly got bigger. This is by no means the only hig wave show in town. The Pipeline Masters, the climax of a yearlong world-round professional circuit, is happening in De-

And we are now in the waiting period for the Quiksilver Eddie Aikau contest, which can only take place when the waves hit a 20ft minimum at Waimea Bay. But there is no questioo that K2, with their man-against-nature rather than man-on-man format, has stolen the limelight this year.

realm of the North Shore said Milton Willis, who has thrown his name into the K2 hat, and as one of the most experienced big-wave men around - riding an 11ft 7in Willis Bros "Phazer" roughly the shape of a church spire - has to be reckoned a major contender. "It's a fantastic opportunity for all those people who haveo't had a veoue before - the unsung

guys without rich sponsors." Whereas in other contests the field is selected according to criteria that always arouse dispute, in the K2 the players are self-selecting; only the most serious hig-wave hunters are going to be in the running. The other object of surfers' wrath is the judge on the beach who watches the waves through hinoculars and, whatever he

"It's open and it's objective," decides, is in writibly occurred of ity against the relevant weathbias. In the K2, the winner is de- er charts. cided on the strength of photographs of the man on the wave. Hence there is another

\$5,000 in the pot for the man

who takes the winning shot. And pictures never lie. Or do they? There is widespread anxiety here about the scope for electronic enhancement. There is a recently published book about Jaws (the oow legendary hig-wave spot on neighbouring Maui) in which - according to North Shore rumour - the surfer has been shrunk in order to amplify the apparent size of the wave itself. K2 have therefore specified that there have to be witnesses too, as well as dates and times and places so as to check the wave off, with some measure of scientific credibili-

There remain, however, dissenting voices. Gary Linden, president of the Association of Professional Surfers, describes K2 as "not an event at all. but a very shrewd publicity stunt". Ken Bradshaw, who has muscles the way a fish has scales. condemns the whole thing as "ludicrous and daogerous it's goiog to pull in all the kooks who shouldn't be out there." The lifeguards are worried they're going to be working overtime ferryiog in the corpses of kids hungry - too hungry - for their moment of

Michael Willis, the other half of the Willis Bros team, who plan on splitting the \$50,000, nisses that view. "It's always

the of this - the most exterienced, the guys in peak condi-

tion - who drown. It's true that coming back to the North Shore, even after a short time, is reminiscent of the relativistic spaceman paradox: a lot of the people you used to know are dead and gone. This year it was Ted Deerhurst, last year Todd Chesser and Donnie Sutherland, and the year before Mark Foo - all of them elite higwave riders, all of them ashes sprinkled on the hreaks they toved and that fically killed

them. In a reaffirmation of traditional paddle-power, K2 prohibits the use of the tow-in technology which has recently opeoed up some of the more monumental offshore breaks. ter you are definitely going to On the more permissive side,

K2 is not restricted to a marticular spot, but includes the whole of the northern Pacific in its ambit. This has thrown into sharp relief the struggle for pre-eminence between Hawaii and the West Coast. So far Mavericks, south of San Francisco, is claiming the higgest waves - 20ft plus - and they have the pictures to prove it. The West Coast reckons to have had five 15-plus days to

Hawaji s two. But this winter's game the quest for the higgest wave has barely begun. And the Hawaiiaos don't appear 100 worried (they hardly ever do). There is always another monster swell on the way. "Andy." said Michael Willis, "this winsee God. Trust me.

just a rope around its chest? The site has all the Photograph: John S Callahan results, still photos and videos, which gives you some idea of the hullriding. Rodeo has a great many related sites and the best way to find these is Billy Joe Jim Boh's (I kid you not) Rodeo Links Page. best-ever line from a rodeo movie: "It's rodeo

> oldest rodeo, and the Cowgirls site. Here you can get to see "some o' them dadgum cowgirls", including Roy Rogers' other half (no. I don't mean Trigger), Dale Evans. This can lead you to the official Roy Rogers and Dale Evans website, which is in seasonal mode at the momeot, but "requests for autographs not accepted". It is surprising to find they are both still alive and celebrating

> > niversary. - Edward Ableson

> > their golden wedding an-

ADDRESSES

QUOTES OF THE WEEK

 It resembled two punchdrunk boxers trying to give it everything, despite having nothing left to give. Roger Uttley, England rugby union manager, after the 26-26 draw against New Zealand

We are a long way from matching South Africa and New Zealand over a series. That was e one-off. Clive Woodward, England coach. I was watching some rugby for the first time. It made me think that tennis players are maybe e bunch of sissies. We'd better beef things up.

John McEnroe. • It was like a throwback to the bad old days of the 70s. Someone even threw a banane et me as I came out for

Hayles, Bristol Rovers' black forward, on fans of Wisbech, his side's FA Cup secondround opponents.

 I think there is a feeling that we just can't lose e game. Peter Schmeichei, Manchester United goalkeeper, before midweek defeat to Juventus.

• 1 will take this club to the North Pole if it means surviving. Sam Hammam, owner of Wimbledon, who are

considering moving to Dublin. If your businesses were run like this football club, they would have gone bankrupt years ago. Norman Dainty, Everton shareholders' representative, to chairman Peter

the second half. Barry With all due respect, I think we can do a lot better when he is not around. John Durnin, of Portsmouth FC, on

club chairman Terry Venables. She may be e Light Blue, but she'll be a dark blue when she's finished. Cambridge rugby fan on the Varsity match streaker. At present the process of

owning horses at any level is like driving on e flat tyre. All we ask for is the luxury of a slow puncture. Spokesman for Sheikh Mohammed, who is threatening to remove his horses from Britain.

 I'm the skinhead Don King. Garv Mason, former British heavyweight boxing champi-Johnson at the Everton AGM. on turned promoter.

ATHLETICS

Absentees provide golden opportunity for Britons

The Britons running in tomorrow's European **Cross-Country** Championships in Lisbon

may not think it is worth competing. Last year's team still have not received their medals. Simon Tumbull reports.

It was in Lisbon three years ago that Diane Modahl underwent the fateful test that led to her initial suspension and the costly court case which ultimately contributed towards the financial collapse of the British Ath-

letic Federation. The positive "It's the first thing we want to two months ago, Jon Brown has sample of concern to British team officials on this occasion, however, is the one Iulia Negura of Romania gave at last year's European cross-country event in Charleroi.

Negura's disqualification after winning the women's race in Belgium led to Romania's exclusion from the team result and Britain's elevation from third to second place. The British team, however, are still waiting to receive their silver medals.

"They didn't even get the hronze medals in the first place," Dave Clarke, the Great

sort out. The girls earned those decided to concentrate on medals and they deserve to have them. The three British team coun-

ters of 12 months ago - Hayley Haining, Andrea Whitcombe and Suzanne Rigg - are all absentees this time. So is Paula Radcliffe. With the World Cross-Country Championship silver medallist contesting the Waikiki road mile in Honolulu today, Vikki McPherson will lead the British challenge in the vomen's race.

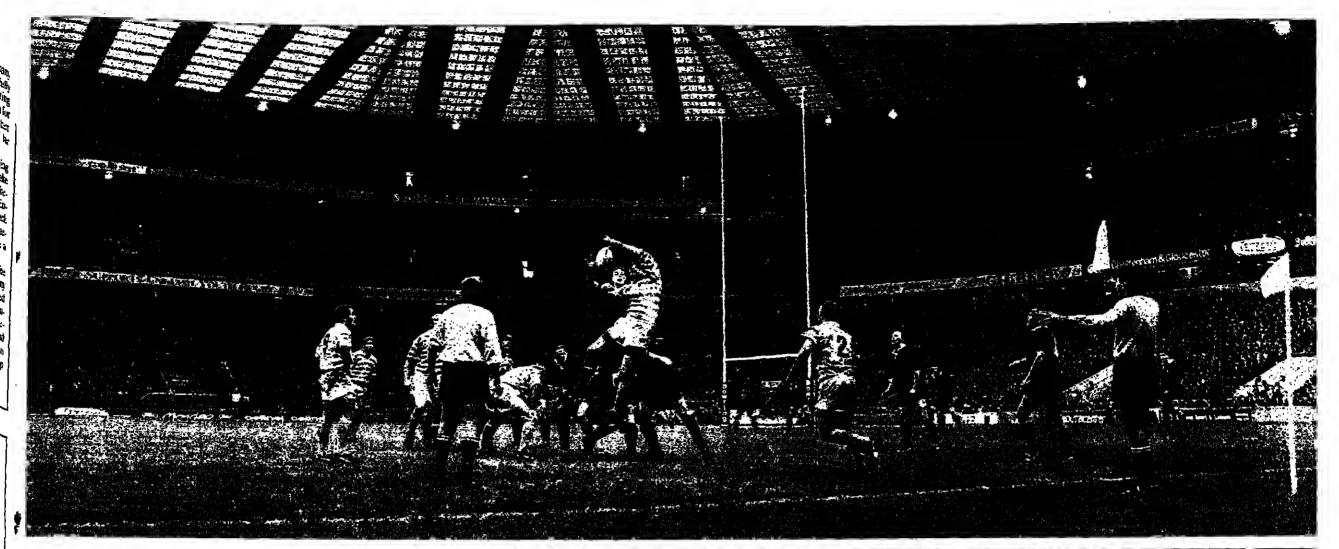
The leading light of British men's cross-country will also be Britain team manager, said. marathon debut in Chicago ished third in Charleroi.

preparing for the County Durham international event on January 3 rather than defend his title in Lisbon.

Injury has deprived the host nation of Paulo Guerra, the winner in 1994 and 1995 and runner-up to Brown last year, so a first-time champion is guaranteed.

The leading candidates include Martin Fiz. the Spaniard who has won both gold and silver World Championship marathun medals, and Mustapha Essaid, the nalmissing. Still recovering from his uralized Frenchman who fin-

15/PHOTO-SHOOT



When fans have more bottle than the teams

posing amateurism on ninetenths of English rugby will no among the Varsity Match faithful. Many of the 70,000 or so who flocked to Twickenham for Tuesday's student showpiece spend their working lives in the City handling money in vast quantities, so the last thing they need is to see their annual winter booze-up disfigured by a dash for cash around the dreaming spires.

If one time-honoured tradition bit the December mud this week - the Rugby Football Union's insistence on neutral touch indges meant there was no not play the old game in quite maybe she was fortified by the room for last season's captains. the proper manner, Paul Surin their badged and blazered fin-ery - many other Varsity shib-outstanding Light Blues from standing ovation. Everyone gets boleths appeared in the rudest All Black country, were clear- an ovation in the Varsity Match. of health. The car parks were yo of the opinion that the tak-

claret, the enthusiasm in the stands was warm and infectious

PHOTOGRAPHS gou chaps, cut it out or else." BY DAVID **ASHDOWN**

Cliff Brittle's campaign to turn smothered in smoked salmon ing part mattered rather less wine back into water by reim- and awash with half-decent than the winning and there was even an ungentlemanly front-row bust-up between an doubt find considerable support in a sozzled sort of way and the American and a New Zealander in the closing minutes. Brian Campsall, the referee, was forced to take the combatants aside for a quiet lecture, no doubt along the lines of: "I say

> It may be that the the Cambridge-supporting streaker who brought the second half to an amused standstill was making some sort of symbolic point Some of the, how shall we stripped bare of its long-estab-say, colonial contingent did wine consumed before kick-off. -Chris Hewett







Copies of these photographs - and any others by the Independent's sports photographers David Ashdown, Peter Jay and Robert Hallam - can be ordered by telephoning 9171-293 2534







Hibernating clubs given wake-up call by advance ticket sales

The Allied Dunbar Premiership returns from suspended animation this afternoon to face an immediate health check. Can professional club rugby take advantage of the England Test team's high-profile heroics and establish itself as a sound commercial proposition, or is the whole ambitious venture no more than a gargantuan slice of pie in the sky? Chris Hewett reports.

Welcome to rughy's Christmas pantomime, which this year boasts an all-star cast including Cliff Brittle as a particularly reactionary wicked witch, Fran Cotton and Bill Beaumont as two provincially minded ugly sisters and the entire rank and file of the Allied Dunbar Premiership as an impoverished Cinderella with ideas far above her station. According to Brittle's version of the script, she will be the first Cinders in history to go from riches to rags.

The first act was performed on Thursday, when the muchmaligned chairman of the Rugby Football Union's management board issued his controversial blueprint for the future of the English game: a many clubs as a peculiar cross Alan Partridge diatribe. Today's second act, in which Cinders finally gets to the ball after four interminable weeks spent locked in the broom cupboard, is deadly serious. Will

by last weekend's wondrous at Twickenham, or will it be a morate-sapping case of After

If advance ticket sales for this afternoon's London derby between Harlequins and Wasps at the clubs are back in business close to an 8,000 capacity crowd," Donald Kerr, Quins' acting chief executive, said yesthat has generated such strong professionalism, we'd have been lucky to pull in 4,000 for a Wasps fixture and the upturn tells us that the potential audience for ctub rugby these days is high higher, indeed, than some people seem to tbink."

Only three months ago, the boot was very much on the other foot. The Heineken Cup match between Quins and Bourgoin, the crack French side who won tast season's European Conference competition, might just as well have been played on the moon for all the support it attracted. The bospitality suites were full and the press box packed, but the paying public decided that 13 September was hair-washing afternoon. All in all, it was a bad moment for rug-

Yet this weekend's Prepronouncement that struck micrship programme promises to be the best-attended of the hetween a Papal Bull and an season, thanks in part to the dramatic content of England's month-long tussle with the heavyweights of the soutbern hemisphere but also to a genuine hunger for top-level club action. Leicester will pull in club rugby successfully ride the 10.000 plus for this afternoon's Hawaiian-sized wave generated game with Sale, Newcastle ex-

helped Pontypridd to the Welsh

National League title last season.

has joined Cross Keys. The full-

back, who toured Australia with

Wales in 1996, is the third play-

ter the arrival of the Newport

centre Steve Reed and the Amer-

Antipodean referees for England

Two of England's Five Nations' Championship matches this season will be controlled by referees from the southern hemi-

The New Zealander, Colin Hawke, has been awarded the er to join the club this week af-Twickenham match against Wales on 21 February, while the Australian, Peter Marshall. takes charge when England entertain Ireland six weeks later.

The England captain, Lawrence Dallaglio, has won the November Allied Dunbar/Rugby World player of the month award, days after being named as the Rugby Writers' Cluh personality of the year.

WINTER OLYMPICS

Moon chosen

A British anti-landmine ac-

and three Olympic Nordic

combined champions witt

be the final torch runners at the

opening of the Nagano

centire Steve Reed and the American prop Marcus Maggard. 1998 FIVE NATIONS REFEREE APPOINTMENTS: Frebruary: France v England (II Bevan, Well, Iretand v Scotland (A Watson, SA). 21 February: England v Wates (C Hawte, NZ), Scotland v France (F Obrien, NZ) 7 March: Wates v Scotland (J Duné, Fr), France v Iretand (J Flama), Sco), 21 March: Revelend v Wates (E Montson, Eng); 22 March: Scotland v England (C Thomas, Wai), 4 April: England v Iretand (P Marshal, Aus), 5 April: Wales v France (D McHugh, Ir).

- Andrew Baldock

England-New Zealand contest the Lord Mayor's Show?

The Stoop are a reliable guide, in a big way. "We've sold more than 5,000 seats and if the weather behaves itself, we'll be terday. "I can't remember a League or Premiership match initial interest here. Before

by's new-age financiers.

maximum of two pre-Christmas England internationals from now on, although they would almost certainly be prepared to settle for a compromise figure of three. What they require urgently is an end to disruptive Crispin Cormack, 27, who

one-off Tests like next weekend's Italy-Ireland match, which will deprive Quins, for instance. of two senior front-row forwards for their trip to Leicester. Quite who Quins will field at the sharp end this afternoon was still under wraps yesterday; the only certainty was that there would be no room for Will Carling (remember him?). Wasps, however, were prepared

predict an audience of around

body charged with administer-

ing the professional club game,

the English Rugby Partnership.

worked closely with Allied Dun-

game and we see that as a

highly encouraging statistic,"

structured season. If we can cre-

a chance of commercial viabili-

ty. It is through regular exposure

that people begin to identify

with their local club, which in turn

translates into regular support.

on the sidelines at Quins and I

We played one or two second-

team games on the mornings of

international matches and there

effectively shut down for a

month and it hurt us. People

spend money at this time of

year, but hecause we bad little

or no rugby to offer, no one was

spending any of it here. Obvi-

ously, we need to forge some

sort of common agreement on

Representatives of the Allied

Dunbar clubs are pushing for a

clubs to keep operating."

We've just had four weeks

"The issue centres on the

said Kerr, who chairs ERP.

During the recent exercise in

8,000 for the visit of Bath.

to divulge their line-up. Alex King has declared himself fit for action after a 20-minute run-out with the second-string in midweek, Laurence Scrase replaces the injured Nick Greenstock in midfield and the flanker Jon

Ions makes his Premiership

debut on the open side.



Andy Long, the Bath hooker, is determined to press his claims for a recall to the

Sarries forecast a Grau day

international dates to enable Saracens face a severe test of their Premiership credentials tomorrow when Bath visit Vicarage Road for the most intriguing contest of the campaign so far. Chris Hewett relishes the prospect of a must-win game for both sides.

> Take one heavy-duty Argentinian prop making a lucrative debut appearance on the Saracens gravy train, throw in a thoroughly fed-up Bath hooker with a reputation to restore and you have the makings of a torrid afternoon shift at the coalface of Premiership rugby. Tomorrow's meeting between Saracens, unbeaten at the top of the table, and Bath. flirting dangerously with mid-table anonymity after two defeats in five outings, may well prove a little lacking in the Christmas cheer department.

Sarries consider Roberto Grau, the Puma who caused so

much disruption to the England of course, but the national seset-piece at Twickenham a year ago, to be the missing piece in Andy Long's reaction to the a title-challenging jigsaw. The Londoners have been seeking a genuinely destructive scrum- after spending a dodgy half in mager for some time: they reverse gear against Australia thought they had it cracked last month, the rookie from the when Tony Daly, the World south coast slipped so quickly Cup-winning Wallahy from Syd-down the rankings that the only ney, pitched up in north Lon- All Blacks he came across were don last season, but were sadly of the under-21 variety. mistaken - Daly was past it long running for Garry Pagel, the

South African strongman. Everything comes to those who wait, however. Mark Evans. the club's director of rugby, believes Grau to be the Real Me-Coy and is even more impressed by the fact that his asking price was nowhere near that of Pagel. We've never considered ourselves to be heavy scrummagers but it will be very inscresting to see what we can do with Roberto in there." he said.

Grau will not be of much interest to the England hierarchy.

lectors will be fascinated by slings and arrows of outrageous fortune. Dropped by England

Bath have not lost faith in before he pulled on a Sarries him though. He keeps Mark Reshirt - and they then found gan, desperately unlucky not to themselves priced out of the regain his Test place against New Zealand, out of the side. saying: "I want to go out and show Clive that I've got a firm case for playing international rughy again. I was deeply disappointed to have been given just 40 minutes so this game could

not have come at a better time." Tim Rodber returns to lead Northampton at London Irish this afternoon while Duncan Bell, a former England under-18 prop. makes his Premiership debut for Sale at Leicester following his £50,000 transfer from Ebbw Vale.

SUPERLEAGUE: Basingstoke Bleon v Ayr Scottish Eagles (630): Bracknet Bees v Cardif Devis (50); Nottingham Parithers v Manchester Storm (70). EXPRESS CUP: Sheffield Stoelers v New-castle Cobras (70).

BOXING: Vacant World Boxing Organisa-tion middleweight championship: R Rhodes (Sheffield) v O Grant (Can) (Ponds Forge Lesure Centre, Sheffield). SWIMMING: ASA National Winter Cham-pionetips (Ponds Forge, Sheffield).

DR MARTENS LEAGUE Southern Divi-sion: Chehrstord v Weymouth (3.0). HARP NATIONAL LEAGUE OF IRELAND Premier Division: Bohemiars v Dundall. (3.15): Cork City v Drogheda (2.0): Univer-sity College Dublin v Derry City (3.15).

TETLEY'S BITTER COUNTY CHAMPI-ONSHIP South League Two: Berkshire v Dorset & Wits (230) (at Abbey). League Four: Somerset v Devon (230) (at Andg-

water, ALLIED DUNBAR PREMIERSHIP ONE: Newcastle v Gloucester; Saracers v Bath. AIB LEAGUE First Division: Lansdowne

Hockey

NATIONAL LEAGUE Premier Division:
Bartord Tigers v Teddington (20); Canterbury v
East Grinslead (10); Hounelow v Guildford
(20); Reacing v Dorcaster (20); Southgate
v Beesson (20). Piret Division: Frebrands
v Odord Univ (120); Gloucester (17) v Bronley (130); Hampstead & Westminster v
Loughborough Students (1230); Harleston
Maggies v Bournville (20); Hawart v Chelmsford (20); Lewes v Sheffield (130); Orland
Hawles v Brooklands (20); Shalms v Isca
(20); Sburport v Indian Gymichana (10); Surbiton v Hull (230); Warnington v Blueharts
(130).

Ice bockey

TOMORROW

Rugby Union

Basketball

Football

WHITBREAD ROUND THE WORLD RACE

Weather eyes open as we leave the bad ju-ju behind

The third leg of the Whitbread Round the World Race, from Fremantle to Sydney, starts today. Merit Cup's skipper needs to engineer a recovery after a disappointing second leg left his boat in fifth place overall, but he still has faith in his crew and his strategy.

This has been a difficult stopover. Not because we had too much to do. More because we came through the last leg with very little damage and we bave had too much time waiting impatiently to get underway again to erase the disappointment of being seventh on the last leg.

When you have taken a knock-down the natural thing is to get up and start fighting again. But we have had to wait for two frustrating weeks before we can throw a punch again. A mandatory eight count is bad enough. Fourteen days has been

bloody awful.

GRANT

Navigator Mike Quilter and I have analysed the strategies for the next leg over and over again as the boys have made good the little damage we suffered on the way over from Cape Town. But it is this morning, as we leave Fremande Sailing Club for the start line, that we can square up again to the game.

Twice before the Whitbread run into Fremantle has been bad ju-ju and when I was here in 1986/7 with the New Zealand America's Cup team I was one of the tune-up crew. Fremantle is a great place and I can't wait to be away from it.

We have resisted the knee-jerk urge to make changes just because we had one bad result. We have confidence in the boat, the sails. and the crew. So why change everything? All the crews have been concentrating on

lot different from the previous two.

The options are fewer, the length is shorter, and once again the theory is that the fleet will be more bunched. Sooner or later that prediction has to come true. So there will be plenty of pressure and tension out there with the extra pressure on us being the need to bang in good result. In a way we are over the last one, but we won't really be over it until we are in Sydney with the target of a top three place achieved.

We are also aware that part of our hurt was based on oldfashioned feelings about the amount of time we were behind the winners. If we had been seventh by seven minutes instead of seven days we would still have scored the same points and it is points that decide the overall winner of this Whitbread/Volvo Race.

There came a point when we were so far behind that the race for us was over for that leg. and we sailed very conservatively for the rest of the time. This time the conditions are likely to be such that those behind will always have the

chance to catch

DALTON

up, and those ahead will have to concentrate like mad to protect their lead. The general expectation is for a nine, maybe eight-day leg. We're taking enough food for 10 and are geared up to scrap every inch of the way.

One job I have not had to do is rebuild the crew in any vay. They are far more relaxed than me and in Kevin Shoebridge I have a watch captain. boat-builder and sailmaker who would still be smiling and telling people to take things easy at the last trump.

But we know we have a lot of people in Britain, Italy and New Zealand who are looking for a big result this time and, of course, next. So this is when the structure of that team should be really valuable. Not as a collection of rock star individuals, but as a group of guys who can play really effectively for each othweather and the choice of er. And for their harassed sails for a leg which will be a skipper.

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- Charles

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HOCKEY

No Luckes for East Grinstead

Cannock went into the midseason break last Christmas failed to win the Premier title. As they currently lead the ahead of East Grinstead, they will go into the break in the lead again this year, whatever the result of tomorrow's game against Old Loughtonians.

The Sussex side, who make the short trip to Canterbury, will be without their Olympic goalkeeper David Luckes, who had a knee operation earlier this week. Luckes, who was in brilliant form last weekend. will be replaced by James Westwood, who could be in for a busy afternoon.

Canterbury, currently in third place with Dave Hacken back in the centre of their midfield, have tooked promising recently, and with their England Under-21 strikers, David Mathews and Stuart Humphries, scoring regularly, they took strong champi- Chelmsford. onship contenders.

affected by the absence of with a four-point lead, yet England Under-18 players, who have a training weekend. Relegation-haunted Beeston Premier table, four points travel to Southgate forced to leave out Matt Taylor, Phillip Sully and Andrew West on schoolboy duties, but will be relieved that Paul Sheardown is fit after a leg injury. New recruits, South African James Edington and

Several key matches will be

James Stacey from Harleston Magpies, are included in their squad. The holidaying John Shaw will be missing from the Southgate line-up. The absence of Greg Nicol

and Gregg Clark - with the South African squad in Argentina - from First Division leaders Surbiton, who entertain Hull, could give secondplaced Havant the chance of leapfrogging them. Chris Wilson, the former

Surbiton forward, makes his long-awaited debut for

- Bill Colwill

SNOOKER

McKenzie issues writ

Jim McKenzie, sacked last rank and file by the chairman, month as chief executive of the Rex Williams. McKenzie also sport's governing body, the World Professional Billiards and Snooker Association, has issued a writ against the organisation for breach of con-

He has written to WPBSA members denying allegations

made claims about where the WPBSA, and the sport as a whole, are going wrong.

"I believe that if properly promoted, marketed, televised and organised there is an extremely bright future for snooker," he said. "If these reported to have been made things are not done, the against him in a letter to the prospects are bleak indeed."

WEEKEND FIXTURE GUIDE

3.0 unless stated to carry torch

Major lootball fotures: page 22 tivist, two world-class runners

Olympic Winter Games in Feb-FA CARILSBERG VASE Third round: Marsie v Bedüngton Terriers; Stockton vv Burscough; Moseley v West Auckland; Pout-ton Vectoria v Kidegrove; Tow Lew v Dun-ston Federation Brewery; Billingham Town v Friar Lane OB; Armold v North Femby; Citherose v Boston Rown; Oadby v Seaham Red Ster: Brigg v Hucknall; Denaby v Berstal; Thackley v Stamford; Blomwich v Spalding; Braintnee v Banstead; Hemel Hempstead v Taunton; Lymngton v Wood-bridge; Bodmin v Bowers; Wintborne v Tiverton (20); Bestdon v Heme Bay; Cowes Soorts v Chard; Portifisien v Ar-Mine activist Chris Moon and the Japanese women runners. Hiromi Suzuki and Masako Chiba, witt be among : the torchbearers, along with Takanori Kono, Masashi Abe

and Reiichi Mikata - all goldmedal winners for Japan in the Olympic Nordic combined team event. Midori Ito, the former Olympic figure skating medalist, will light the cauldron. The inclusion of the two tong-distance runners witt act as a "bridge between the"

Nagano Games and the Sydney summer Olympics," a spokes-A former British Army officer. Moon lost a leg and an arm while defusing landmines in Mozambique in 1995. He will join the opening ceremony with the use of leg and hand

After the Olympic flame is lit in Grecce on 19 December. the torch will travel through all of Japan's 47 prefectures from 6 January to 7 February. About 1.200 runners are involved in the month-long nationwide

- Ted Heaney :

Tiverton (20); Besidon v Herrie bay; Cowes Sports v Chard; Porthleven v Ar-lessy; Bridgort v Potters Bar Town; Folke-stone Invicta v Chipetead; Brook House v Histon; Peacehaven & Telscombe v Sud-bury Town; Aveley v Wrocham; Stotfold v Histon: Peaceivaven & Telscombe v Sud-bury Town: Aveley v Wrodham; Stotlold v Ashlord (Midch): Thatchem v Burgles Hil: Great Walkering v Weeldstone: Brache Sparta v By; Chponham v Tooling & Mitchem; Camberley v Sudbury Wander-

Micham; Camberley v Sudbury Wanderers.

RYMAN LEAGUE Premier Division: Chesham v Kingstonian; Dulwich v Basingstoke; Enfleto v Hitchin; Gravesend v Bishopa Storitord; Hendon v Watton & Hersham, Heybridge v Harnow Borough; Oxford City v Dagertham & Redbridge; Purfleet v Carshalton; St Abens v Bromley; Sutton Utri v Ayesbury; Yading v Boreham Wood, First Division: Abingdon Town v Romford; Aldershot v Maiderhead; Barton Rovers v Wokingham; Billericay v Leatherhead; Bognor Fagis v Thame; Cherisey v Grays, Croydon v Wembley; Hampton v Worthing; Leyton Pennant v Berkhamsed; Uhdridge v Staines; Whytheleale v Molesey; Second Division: Edgware v Bracknet; Egham v Camey Island, Horsham v Barkne; Hungerford v Wingsor & Bon; Marlow v Wiverince; Berssad v Bedford Town; Northwood v Metropolitan Police; Tibury v Chaltoni St Peter. Third Division: Croydon Athleto v Wingase & Finchley; East Thurock v Dorking; Epsom & Ewell v Ware; Harlow v Clapton; Hornchurch v Ting; Kingsbury v Ford Utt; Lewes v Hertford; Southall v Flackwell Hazit.

Heath.
UNIBOND LEAGUE Premier Division: Ac-UNIBOND LEAGUE Premier Division: Ac-cangton Stately v Athinchem; Athelon v Colwyn Bay, Barrow Wireland; Blyth Sper-tans v Hyde: Beston Utd v Barnber Bridge; Chorley v Spernymoor; Emiley v Marine; Gainsborough Trinity v Bishop Aucktand; Lancaster v Leigh FMR; Raddiffe Borough v Runcom. First Division; Belper v Ash-

tori Utd: Congleton v Gretra; Droyleden v Netherfield; Paraley Celtic v Eastwood Town; Fixton v Lincoln Utd; Madlock v Great Harwood; Stocksbridge v Harrogete Town: Wratby v Worksop; Whitely Bey v Bradford Park Avenue; Workington v Witton Albion. DR MARTENS LEAGUE Premier Division: Atherstone Utid v St Leonards Stamicroft; Bath City v Burton Abdon; Bromsgrove Rovers v Salisbury; Crawley v Meftinyr Tydft; Dorchester Town v Cambridge City; Forest Green Rovers v Aninaaton Borough; Grealey Rovers v Ashford (Kent); Heatings v King's Lynn; Rothwell v Halsasowen fown: Stitingbourne v Tamworth; Worcester v Gloucester, Michand Division: Brackley v Stafford Rangers; Grantham v Corby; Hinckley Utid v Racing Cub Warwick; Reston v Bedworth; Redditch v Biston: Shepshed Dynamo v VS Rugby; Softwil v Raunds; Stouthridge v Pinget Rangers; Sutton Coldieled v Moor Green; Websch v Eighand. Southern Division: Baldock v Tenbindge Angels; Bashley v Ertit & Balvedere; Crancester v Cinderfort; Clevedon Town v Fisher Athletc, Dartford v Weston-super-Mare; Havant v Towbridge; Margab v Newport (Owent); Newport (OW) v Winney; Walerdoville First Division: Chetham v Whitshable; Cray Wanderers v Corinthian; Crockenfill v Ramsgalis; Erith Town v Canberbury; Swenley Linds v Stade Green; VCD Athletic v Lordswood. DR MARTENS LEAGUE Premier Division: Atherstone Utd v St Leonards Stamcroft

interruge view v State Green; V.CD Amletic v Lordswrod.

UNIJET SUSSEX COUNTY LEAGUE
First Division: Aurole v Mile Oak, Chichester v Rechill; Eastbourne Town v Pagham,
Hallsham v Hassocks; Ringmer v Shoreham: Selsey v Horsham YMCA; Whitshawk,
v Portfield; Wick v Salkdean.

UHLSPOPT UNITED COUNTIES
LEAGUE Premier Division: Bourne v
Long Buckby; Buckhrigham Town v St
Nedis: Desborough v Potton; Eynesbury
v Cogenhoe: Kempston v Stewarts &
Lloyds Corby; Northempton Spencer v Helbeach; Wellingborough v Wootton; Yaxley
v Mintees Blackstone. SCREWFIX DIRECT LEAGUE Premier DI-

vielon: Barnstaple v Bristol Menor Farm; Bideford v Backwel; Bristington v Man-gotsfeld; Ernore v Odd Down; Keyn-sham v Tornington: Melksham v Caine; Paution Rovers v Westbury. NORTHERN COUNTIES EAST LEAGUE Premier Division: Armthorpe Weisure v Curzon Ashton; Maltby v Hallam; Ossett Albon v Haffield Mahr; Pickering v Eccleshit: Pontefract v Liversedge: Selby v Glasshoughton; Sheffield v Ossett Town. Glasshoughton; Sheffield V Ossett Town.
NORTH WEST COUNTES LEAGUE First
Division: Atherton Collegies v Holker Old
Boys; Darwen v Maine Road; Glassop
North End v Haslangden; Nantwich v
Chedderton; Newcastle Town v Atherton
LP: Remstottom v Rossendale; Saliced City
v Vauchall Galf; St Halans v Blackpool
Rovers; Warrington v Prescot Cablea.
JEWSON WESSEX LEAGUE: Aerostructures v Brackenhurs; BAT Sports v Andover, Benerion Heath v Christinutri; EsAT
Covers Vics v Totton; Sastleigh v Romsey;
Whitchurch v Portsmouth RN.

JEWSON EASTERN LEAGUE Premier Di-vision: Clecton v Diss: Fakerham v Hal-stead: Gorleston v Feliostowe; Harwich & Parkeston v Bury Town; Newmarket v Wat-ton; Stowmarket v Scham; Tiptree v Low-estoft; Warboya v Great Yarmouth. esan; Warroys v Crear ramoun:
INTERLINK EIDRESS MIDLAND ALLIANCE: Boldmere St Michaels v Wednesfield; Chaselown v Oldbury; Halesowen Harriers v King's Norton; Flushall Clymplc v Barwell; Sandwell Borough v Knypersley Victoria; Shirhal v Pershore; Stapenhill v Pelsall Villa; Stratford v West Midlands Police; Willenhall v Endgnorth.

v Pelsal Vizi; Stratord v West Midards Police; Wilsenhal v Endgnorth
ARNOTT INSURANCE NORTHERN
LEAGUE First Division: Beingham Synthonic v RTM Newcaste; Cornect v Shidon;
Crook v South Shields; Jamow v Easington; Morpeth v Murton; Perritin V Durham
PRESS a JOURNAL HIGHLANII
LEAGUE: Brora Rangers v Keith; Clechnecuddin v Lossenouth; Cove Rangers v Wick Academy; Deveronale v Huntly; Fort
Wilson v Forres Mechanics; Naim County v Rothes; Pelerhead v Eight
LEAGUE OF WALES: Aberystwyth v
Cornents Cusy Normate (230; Barryor City
v Cwmbran (20; Barry Town v Welstrippool
(230; Caengriron v Blow Valle (230); Carnarithen v Rhyl (20); Cernase Ynys Mon
v Inter Cable-fel Cardiff (230); Corney
v Rissyader (230; First v Caerawa (230);
Porthmadog v Haverfordwest (230); TNS
Lansardifficial v Newtown (20).
Salinnoff Irilish LEAGUE Premier Division: Ands v Limfield: Ballymana v
Citionville; Gentoren v Colerane; Ornagh
v Glenavon; Portadown v Cruadors, First
Division: Bargor v Dungarnon Swifts; Carlok Rangers v Lame; Limavady v Distiery;
Newry v Ballyclars.
HARP NATIONAL LEAGUE OF IRELAND Premier Division: Firnt Harps v
Shamnock Rovers (730); Silgo Rovers v
Kilkerny (730).

Rugby Union 3.0 unless stated
TETLEY'S BITTER COUNTY CHAMPI-TETLEY'S BITTER COUNTY CHAMPI-ONSHIP North and Midlands League One: Durham v Cumbris (215) (at Hartle-pool Rovers); Warwinckshire v Nortis, Lincs 8. Derby (at Rugby). League Two: Landadina v Leicastershire (2.5) (at Prestor Grasshogers); North Midlands v Chedrins (2.30) (at Worcester). League Three: Northumberland v East Midlands (2.0) (at Alminoli; Staffordshire v Yorkshire (2.30) (at Alminoli; Staffordshire v Yorkshire (2.30) (at Alminoli; Staffordshire v Violucestershire (2.35) (at Henton). League Three: Buckinghamshire v Hampshire (2.15) (at Amersham & Chillem); Surrey v Kent (2.0) (at Sutton & Epsom). League Three: Catordshire v Middlesse. (2.0) (at Oxford Univ). ALLIED DUNBAR PREMIERSHIP OHE: Bitstol v Richmond; Harlequins v Wassis; Lecester v Sale (2.15); London Insh v Northampton. Premiership Two: Coventry v Blackmadh; Fytica v Ornel (2.15); London Scottish v Rotherham; Wassiey v Walsfield; Waterloo v Bedford (2.15); West Hartlepool v Exeter.

JEWSON NATIONAL LEAGUE ONE: Harrogate v London Welsh (2:15), Liverpool St Helans v Leads (2:30), Notingham v Rosslyn Park, Two North: Camberley v Tabard (2:0), WELSH NATIONAL LEAGUE Premier Division (2:0): Cardiff v Swansea (2:30): Ebbr Vale v Neath: Newport v Lanelf, Protypndd v Bridgen? First Division (2:0): Bischwood v Cross Krys; Durwant v Aberston; Llandovery v Borymaen; Newbridge v UWIC; Porthypool v Merthyr; Pamney v Cearphaly; South Willes Police v Messteg; Trearchy v Abertillery; SRIU TENNENTS PREMIERSHIP First Division (2:0): Edmburgh Acades v Jed-Forest; Hawdi v Boroughnur, Meinse v Herfols FP; Watsonians v Currie; West of Scotland v String County; Second Division (2:0): Eiggar v Nelso; Illundee HSFP v Gala; Kamarnock v Peebles; Krincaldy v Musseburgh, Preston Lodge v Gassyow Hawis, Third Illivision (2:0): Gierrotnes v Stewarts Metvile FP; Cordonars v Glasgow Southern; Himead/lucianilla v Ayr; Sefork v Aberdeen GSFP; Stewarts v Grangemouth.

Alia League First Division (2:30): Belly-ceased Selectors of College Device v Wester v Messer.

Stewartry v Grangemouth.

Alls LEAGUE First Division (2.30): Balymena v Slackrock College; Dolphin v Young Murster; Garryoven v Od Belvedere; Old Crescent v Constitution: Shammon v Clontart; St. Mary's v Dungarmon. Second Division (2.30): Suocaneers v Sunday's Wel; Galwegters v Deny; Greyationes v Instantars: Montration v Wanderes; Old Westey v Melone; Stemes v DLSP.

CLUB MATCHES: Cheltenham v Berningtram/Soffati, Hoddey v Market Bosworth (2.30); Manchester v Broughton Park (2.15); Metropoktan Pošce v Stroud; Plymouth v Okshampston (2.30); Henricy v Stanes (2.16); Stanes (2.16).

ESL SOUTH Premier: Beckenham v Ancharars; Bourhemouth v Eastcote, City of
Portsmouth v Purley; Fareham v Gore
Court; Rangarha v High Wycombe; Richmond v Herne Bay; Trojans v Wokars; Tunbridge Wele v Chichester; Wimbledon v
Maidenhead; Winchester v Old Whitghtans,
NORTH First Division: Ben Pflydding v
Formbry; Durham Univ Swalwet; Herrogate
v Timperloy; Neston v Wigan; Norton v
Sheffield Barkers; Southport v Chester.
DTZ METE AND Promiers Brosserskiel v Nike. DTZ MDT.AND Premier: Biossomiled v Not-tingham; Bioxwich v Hampton-in-Arden; Coventry & North Warwock v Northampton Saints, Ediplaston v North North Stafford v Harborne.

Basketball

Stafford v Harborne.

WOMEN'S EAST Pramier; Sury St Edmunds v Sevencaks; Cambridge City v Ashford; Sf Albaris v Ipswich; Welwyn Garden
City v Hareston Magpies.

WOMEN'S WEST Premier: Cheftenham v
Vide: Exeter v Bournemouth; Evmouth v Colwat; Leonnister v Rediand, Taunton Vale v
St Austel.

BUDWEISER LEAGUE: Derty Storm v Exide London Towers (7300; Newcastle Engles
v Pougeor Buitors Brimnerson (80); Thames
Vadey Togen v Sheffield Sharins (80).
UHI-BALL TROPHY: Converse Crystal
Palace v Wafford Royals (730); ITT LAE Wonthing Bears v Adides Greater London Leopants (80).

BUDWEISER LEAGUE: Peugeot Bullets Birmingham v Derby Storm (630). UNI-BALL TROPHY: Chester Jets v Renault Leocatur Riddes (730); Sheffield Sharks v Newcastle Eagles (60). Ice hockey SUPERLEAGUE: Cardiff Devils v Ayr Scot-tish Eagles (70); Newcastle Cobras v Man-chester Storm (630), Sheffield Steelers v Nottingham Panthers (630)

Other sports SWIMMING: ASA National Writer Cham-pionships (Ponds Forgs, Shetfield).

حكدًا من الاجل

Four-legged greats and hunting the real McCoy

You don't survive on The Sun the greatest chasers I have ever for almost 30 years without being a cutc cookie, and the currant hun's racing correspondent, Claude Duval, remains one of the willest. Real McCoy (Hodder & Stoughton £16.99).

The full title is the givcaway here as the sub-headline "My Life So Far" appears on the cover of the biography of hampion jockey Tony Mc-Coy. The Irishman was only 22 when he landed his Cheltenham Festival hig-race double earlier this year and there will surely be further chapters to come in his sporting life.

McCoy's hook Isorry, Claude's book) is interesting nevertheless as we see the backcloth that has produced the hungriest contemporary National Hunt pockey, Indeed, you seldom get to read much anywhere else, as he is contracted largely to The Sun and money for his opinions.

RACING McCoy's first-person BOOKS FOR text is punctu-CHRISTMAS ated by others BY RICHARD who appear in his life-play, EDMONDSON and there are

also passages A P McCoy himself.

of my colleagues, may losers, Richard Dunwoody's thoughts for Hands & Heels (Partridge Press £20). These two denizers , t & of the weighing room have of, perhaps, the most chariscollaborated in print before, malic horse alive today. Folhut may never do so again. lowing serious injury the It appears Armytage is finding it increasingly difficult to persuade the taciturn Dunwoody to offer any coherent thoughts.

> venture, and an expensive one he worth a look. to follow at £20, It concerns the imals who achieved their greatest feats either before or efter he was allowed on their ¿acks.

Perhaps the most interesting chapter is on the unfortunate Rushing Wild, whose pelvis fell apart as he was leading in the 1993 Irish National. "I include him because. although his career was tragically short-lived, he was one of also just as good.

ridden," Dunwoody says.

Yet another inhabitant of Britain's press room, Derek Thompson, has a go with Tommo's Year (Boxtree £14.99). and most feared, members of 1 must admit 1 like Tommo the press room. When Claude hecause he sometimes lets asks you to assess one of his me sit in his chair and refers hooks, your heels instinctive- to me either as big fella or ly go together and there is a matey because he hasn't got a natural tendency to clevate hlind clue who I am. The great the tome to the top of any re- thing about the man is that all view. Which hrings us to The that Widow Twankey stuff he does on television is not put on. He is actually exactly like that in real life.

Much as I adore Tommo it was an astonishing moment when I heard he was writing a book, rather like the time as a child when you see a circus elephant balancing on a heach hall for the first time. But he's done it all right and if you want to find out who Tommo's mates are (Walter Swinburn, Frankie Dettori, Jack Charlton to name hut a few), where he stays for the races and why Dubai is heaven on earth this book is a must, Ideal for children's stocking-fillers.

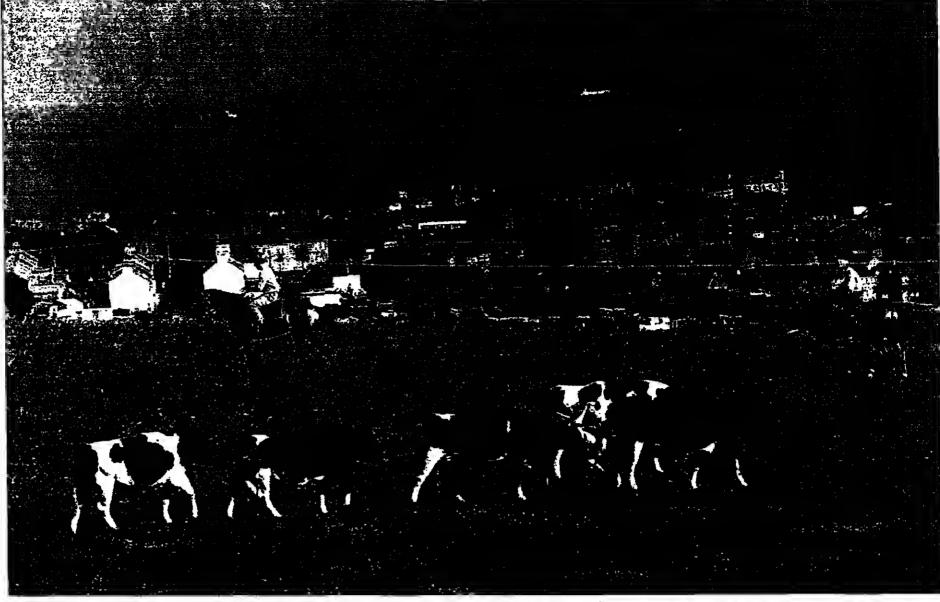
To Win Just Once (Headline about A P McCoy's (houghts £16.99) investigates life away from the cameras and bright lights as it details the life of a has other agents demanding journeyman jumps jockey. Guy Lewis faces all

the harriers of the weighing room prolethe tariat: long, fruitless journeys; lack of money and frustration. But no obsta-

from the co-writer. Whether ele could be greater than the the latter are needed is de- layout of bis own book. Clashbatable, as, for those of us who ing typefaces and formats, a have fallen into Claude's com-splashing of asterisks and othpany, there seems to be as cr digits make progress a strugmuch C Duval about some of gle. This is a shame as we the jockey's reminiscences as constantly need to be reminded that for every winner, there Murcus Armytage, another are the tiers and tears of the

on Irish themes. Danoli, the People's Champion (Robson Books £16.95) details the life gelding may never return to the station he once occupied, hut don't tell that to his trainer, Tom Foley. Any book containing the thoughts of this This may, then, be their last humble and helpful man must

Champion Charlie (Mainhest horses Dunwoody has stream Puhlishing £14.991 is come across in his enduring not a rushed joh following and successful career, not only Suny Bay's victory in the Henthe ones he himself has part-nessy. Gold. Cup., rather nered exclusively, but also an- Michael Clower's detailed observation of the perennial iumps lockey champion of Ireland. Charlie Swann is the Irish son of an Englishman and Clower himself is a classic British gentleman turning green after 25 years over the Irish Sea. In Jayout and research this hook is much reminiscent of Clower's earlier work on Michael Kinane. It's



Trevor Jones and George Selwyn, two of Britain's foremost racing photographers, have collaborated to produce 'The Spirit of Racing' (Kensington West Productions, £16.99), a delightful collection of photographs from the sport of kings. The book features pictures from all around the world and captures the great beauty of this most photogenic of sports. Photographs: Above: Town meets country and the coast at Mary Reveley's Saltburn gallops on England's north-east coast. Below left: Remittance Man, one of the fastest chasers of recent years, with his travelling companion, Nobby the sheep. Below right: A foal at Dalham Hall Stud Photographs: George Selwyn (above); Trevor Jones (below left and right)





The legend of Sampras remains under construction

retired, enjoying his millions and well past caring what people think, fond memories of Pete Sampras' superlative tennis may finally eclipse a somewhat negative response to much of his

Jimmy Connors and John McEnroe achieved such an incredible pitch of high performance with low behaviour that it was never going to be easy for the players who followed them, particularly Americans. Sampras has tended to suffer by comparison for being good without being bad.

Herb Branham's unauthorised hiography, Sampras: .4 Legend in the Works, is a timely reminder why his fellow resident of Tampa, Florida, was recently voted by his peers as the No I player in the 25 years since the inauguration of the Association of Tennis Professionals, which hecame the ATP Tour.

The book's title is apt. The accompanied by grief in recent point.

nours, especially Grand Slam pras has won 10, two fewer than the record held by Australia's Roy Emerson. Sampras, moreover, has yet to win the French Open, the only one of the four

classics played on red clay. Branham's research would hardly be complete without a word from Rod Laver, one of Sampras' idols and the only man to accomplish the Grand Slam twice. According to the great Australian left-hander, Sampras' prospects of winning on the Paris clay might increase if he took a hit off his serve, went after his returns a little more and got to the net more than ever. Laver added that Sampras' occasional lapses had no place

in the clay-court mentality and noted an improved steadiness. Sampras' success has been

One day, probably when he is 26-year-old Sampras' legend years - the death of his coach, remains under construction as Tim Gullikson, from brain canhe continues the quest for ho- cer look an emotional toll on the Wimbledon champion. The singles charupionships. Sam- author also touches on reports bert Hall represents the first ripthat Sampras suffers from a mild form of anaemia.

If the success of the Honda Challenge ATP Senior Tour event featuring Bjorn Borg and John McEnroe at the Royal Alples of a wave of nostalgia, A Handful of Summers will certainly go with the flow. Gordon Forbes' classic account of life on

Open tennis is guaranteed to

warm a winter's night. There is

also Forbes' sequel, Too Soon to

Panic, for readers game enough

to have their sides split twice.

longer still in Max Robertson's

The Ballad of Worple Road, a his-

tory in verse of the original All

England Club grounds (1877-

1921). Robertson, the BBC's

Voice of Wimhledon for more

The trousers and skirts are

The player's sister, Stella, who coached the women's teanis team at UCLA, "says that the tour before the advent of

she also had the disease and

stressed that it was no big deal

and that it played no part in ber

brother's conditioning short-

comings." Sampras has publicly

denied that he has the afflic-

ality didn't make for good

copy," Branham observes dur-

ing one passage. The author

does his best to contradict the

"Sampras' vanilla person-

TENNIS BOOKS

BY JOHN ROBERTS

ed a reading on tape as a companion to the book. Medieval Europe and mod-

ern Grand Slams figure in A Little History of Tennis, by John Crace, the neatest way to put the sport in your pocket without becoming an agent. Wimbledon '97, wet and

wonderful, is captured in words and photographs in the official annual, text by John Parsons and photography by the Allsport Dablgren, development adteam of Clive Brunskill, Gary M Prior and Stu Forster. The 1997 Wimbledon Compendium, by Alan Little, is a must for for the Swedish Tennis Associthose who like to dip into virtually every aspect concerning the world's most prestigious

The US Open - Game, Set, Unmatched, is a handsome pictorial history of the United States Championships with text by Roger M Williams. Not seen in this country yet, it is published by Time Life Books and might be avaitable through Sports

Pages (0171 240 9604 or 0161 832 8530). ITF World of Tennis, edited

by John Barrett, remains the most comprehensive annual covering the international scene. Those who teach the game, or wish to learn to play, or are keen to improve their technique and enjoyment of the sport are recommended The Way to Play, by Leif ministrator for the International Tennis Federation and the former director of education ation.

ation.

Sampvas - A Legend in the Works by IA Branham (Breedon Books, \$1499); A Handful of Summers by Gordon Forbes (Harper Collins, \$2599); Too Soon to Panic by Gordon Forbes (Harper Collins, \$2599); The Ballad of Worple Road by Mar Robertson (Lemnard/Gueen Anne Press, \$1999); A Little History of Tennis by John Crace (Applicates Press, \$1492); Tipe Official Worbledon Annual 1997 by John Persons (Hazleton Publishing, \$20); 1997 Wimbledon Compendium by Alan Little (The All England Lawn Renne Caub. \$750); Tho US Open, Garrer, Set, Unmethed by Roper in Walkarns (Time Life Books, \$2595); Tho US Open, Garrer, Set, Unmethed by Roper in Walkarns (Time Life Books, \$2595); The Way to Play by Leit Dohlgren (Miner va Press, \$1259)

Every question was a springboard for some bizarre autobiographical ramble



CHRIS MAUME

SPORT ON TV edly to have anything to do with Secret Lives (C4), a documentary devoted to digging up all the dirt on him that was fit to transmit. Finally he agreed – as long as he was paid what the programme

called "a small fortune."

This was the film's pay-off. the intended twist in the tale, the final, telling example of a sporting hero's venality. Except that to my mind it seemed a And even worse than that. reasonable request - you trash me, you pay me.

Sportsmen hardly need to have perfect private lives to win women probably do, but that's another story), so it's not at all still merit the epithet "muchchokey and being stripped of the Queen's haubles.

Secret Lives called him "Britain's greatest sportsman", which is slightly debatable. But

- which they did with a remorselessness that, if the programme was anything to go by, was wortby of the Long Fellow himself.

The picture was of a compulsive skinflint, womaniser, lieger supreme and all-purpose sponger. Worse, a mistreater of horses, and a ruthless jockey. on the track and away from it. His former chauffeur,

Michael Hinchcliffe, told a story from 1976 when the driver of another car took exception to the hearts of nations (sports-something Hincheliffe did and began to berate Piggott, who ordered Hinchcliffe to drive off paradoxical that Piggott should at speed. Unfortunately, the man's arm was caught in the car loved", despite his spell in window, and he was dragged along then thrown clear. "I think he's dead," Hinch-

cliffe said. "Serves him right," Piggott replied. There was a heady seem of

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Lester Piggott refused repeat- horse in order to knock him off with money and general meanness," said "The Scout" - Ross Benson, formerly of the Daily Express. "He can't help himself. It's compulsive, like a child or an animal."

> Benson, owner Robert Sangster, Lloyd's syndicate partner Ian Posgate, crstwbile rival Willie Carson, trainer Luca Cumani, they all queued up to have a go, and few of them were able to pass up the are you playing at?" opportunity of imitating his nasal, hard-of-hearing diction.

Which was what my favourite anecdote centred on. During the Cumani letter affair. his friend. Charles St George, and "The Scout" went pose their own D-notice. Privilege gathered its skirts around it as the race-loving newspaper magnates sealed their lips -Robert Maxwell, who, accord-

bouncing up and down in bis leather chair in glee. hadn't declared. Do not pass go. Do not collect £200.

Piggott rang Radford, pretending to be a Customs and Excise officer, to find out how much he had to fear. Unsurprisingly, Radford wasn't fooled, and played him along, saying, "We've gol enough on this fellow to put him away for 20 years." Finally, he could stifle the gipples no longer and said, "Lester, what

"How did you know it was me?" Piggott asked.

Sometimes it was hard not to laugh, for all his small-mindedness. I liked the story of how he pinched another jockey's whip, mid-race at Deauville, and round Fleet Street, trying to im- another tale it was hard not to relish was how he was nabbed by the Inland Revenue. Having come to a hard-

fought agreement to disclose apart from People owner everything and stump up a of them now, he's finally realised huge wedge, he wrote out a that, similar to the apparently ing to Brian Radford, the jour- ebeque. Except that he was contractual tantrums required they had to put him on his high scores being settled. "He is sick nalist covering the case, was drawing on an account he of John McEnroe in seniors' Hirst.

go. Do not collect £200.

One fact Secret Lives missed out on was the fact that Piggott bad his prison sentence lengthcned by a week for smuggling in phonecards. This emerged in They Think It's All Over (BBC1), which was otherwise devoted to one man. The programme's purpose, it became dear from the first question, was to allow Chris Eubank to make a complete dickhead of himself.

In the past, when Brighton's soi-disant Beau Brummel (crazy cane, crazy guy) has appeared on programmes for a which a sense of humour is recommended, he has been found wanting completely unable, for example, to see the joke about Mrs Menon - that the joke's on him. But he has done so many

tennis. Eubank is on to come over as an egotistical wally and give his fellow participants, and the audience, a good laugh at bis expense. Much like his boxing career, really.

With that Mike Leigh-style absence of self-consciousn he takes himself risibly seriously, and every question was a springboard for some bizarre autobiographical ramble -"Have I been sacked and nobody's Iold me?" said Nick Hancock during one excursion through Eubank's pasi life.

"Do you need a visa to enter your world?" Hancock said at one point. And Lee Hirst was not one to let a spot of piss-taking go by without joining in. Eubank said, apropos of nothing remotely relevant, "I raced rats as a child - [derisive audience laughter] - this is educational rats can only live 15 years -"

"So you can never shag 'em then, can you?" interjected

I have been critical in the past about They Think It's All Over's easy recourse to scatology, but there was a lovely moment as Randy the horse, one of the mystery guests in the touchy-feely round, was led off stage by its showjumping rider, Michael Whitaker, Rory McGrath referred to the hardto-miss equine penis, and Hancock leapt in, quick as a well-scripted flash, "that makes two massive pricks on the show this week." You can easily imagine Eu-

bank becoming, in time, one of that band of fondly regarded (by some, anyway) Slightly Irritating Great British Eccentrics, such as Jimmy Savile, Russell Grant and, until recently, Gary Glitter, Unlike Lester Piggott, wbose strangeness, compounded by what Willie Carson called his "ring of steel", will always keep him apart from his

- 4 declared -BETTING: 8-11 Escentefique, 11-8 Northern Starlight, 12 Clever Remer 1996. Impertal Virtage 6 m O N Willemson 8-11 for [Mes V Williams) 2 ren FORM GUIDE

Northern Starlight has been a revelation eince being brought but of a seling hurdle two seasons ago His only defeat in seven outings last term was when falling in from at the final flight of Haydock's Swinton Hurdle and he is on the way to equaling that record over tences. Not including his two attempts as a youngster over the Franci-style tences, ESCARTFIGUE is way behind in terms of experience and has had just the one run over fences in a four-runner race at Worcester. He had fittle to beat, but that did at least show he could jump fluently and the smart stelying hurdler has all the orderhals to make a top-class chaser. Clever Remark will be the whipper-m. Selection: ESCARTFIGUE FORM GUIDE

	2	.30	TRIPLEPRINT GOLD CUP HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS A) £60,000 added 2m 5f Penalty Value £37,574
	1		SEEPLY DASHING (21) (D) (Sieve Hammond) T Easterby 8 11 10 L Wyer Red. White sists. Emerated Green steeves. White armiels. Emerate Green cap
	2	54-22	CHALLENGER DU LUC (FR) (16) (CD) (EF) (D Johnson) M Pipe 7 th 9 . A P McCay B Royal Blue, Emergid Green sleeves, White cap, Emergid Green spots
-	3	18-F21	SENOR B. BETRUTTI (29) (CD) (Gerard Nock) Mrs 5 Nock 6 ti 3
,	4	1/12-8	TRYING AGAIN (14) (CD) (W H Dore) D Gamdoto 9 11 0 R Durawoody Light Blue, Dark Blue scalt, hooped sleaves, quartered cap
•	5	3301-	BBLLS LIFE (284) (D) (R Gibbs) P Hobbs 6 1) 11
-	6		MAJOR BELL (14) (D) (A C Whitens) A Whitens 6 to 8
	7		KADI (GER) (24) (CD) (JE Brown) D Nicholson 8 To 8
	6	21-14F	DESTIN D'ESTRIUVAL (28) (D) (Dayen C Marcer) D Nicholson 8 T0.4 R Thornton (3) Black, White hoops, Black steeres, White spoos
	6	WF-12	FINE THYNE (21) (0) (Paler Wingerd) Mrs A Perrett 6 10 1 M A Pitzgerald Pink Dark Blue hoops

SETTING: 9-4 Simply Deshing, 4 Trying Again, 9-2 Challenger Du Luc, 13-2 Fine Thyms, Senor El Betrutti, 7 Major Boll, 18 Bells Life, 20 Destin D'Estruval, 25 Kadi 1986: Addington Boy 8 11 To A Dobbin 7-4 ter (6 Richards) 10 ran

1896. Addington Boy 8 11 to A Dobbin 7-4 by 65 Rehards) to ran
FORM GUIOE

Turning for home in the Hennessy Gold Cup a fortright ago nothing was going better
than Tryling Agein. He didn't get home but put up a most encouraging performance on
his first outing since running subsequent Scottish National winner Belmont King (rec 10.b))
to just over a length at Chepetow almost a year earlier. The best may not yet have been
seen of Tryling Agein and he has been at leading fancy for this all week, but unfortunately
to him SIMPLY DASHING has adeatepped haydock's Torminy Whittle Chase in favour
of this even more valuable prize. For such a young horse Simply Dashing has already
achieved a great deal, over hundles as well as fences. The shuyeer-old came back shar
eight months off to annihilate Senor Ell Behruttl (Sib better in) at Weitherby and Indiawed
up by beating Fine Thyne (Sib pul) at Ascott. The Westerby run was paid the righest
compliment when Senor Ell Behruttl went on to beat Challenger Du Luck by three lengths
in the Murphy's Gold Cup here three weeks ago, and Smoly Dashingh Ascott win was titte short of misractious after a bad mistake at hathway knocked him right back. Challenger
Du Luck has a 3th pull on Murphy's running, in theory that leaves nothing in it, but the
Pipe horse Isn't easy to win with and there might be better value to be had with Mejor
Bell. Unbeaten in four attempts in 1995-96, Mejor Bell has yet to be unplaced over knocks
and his second to Sparky Gayle in the Cathoant at the Festival here was a good effort
Selection. SMPLY DASHNG

3.05 BONUSPRINT BULA HURDLE (Grade 2) (CLASS A) £35,000 added 2m 1f Penalty Value £21,770 C4

-8 declared -BETTING: 6-4 Pridwell, 4 Collier Bay, 9-2 Large Action, 7 Refixed, 15-2 Shooting Light, 10 Binney, 26 Just Little, 50 Moorleh 1996: Lerge Action 6 11 6 J Osborne 5-4 lav (O Sherwood) 7 ran

FORM GUIDE

The return of Large Action, womer of this race in 1994 and 1996, and the 1996 champion hundler Coffier Bay, adds great interest, though neither may be forward enough to cope with the returned PRIDWELL. Only seventh in this year is Champion Hundle, an which Large Action and Coffier Bay were pused up, and probably better over further. Probably could not be in better form at present and has enjoyed himself this eason with three wins without coming off the bit. In his present transe of mind he can make the most of his superior fitness. Birnsey was beating portions before the was beating into his first outing from his present yard. He can do a lot better than that - he was beating just had a length by Large Action in this race lest year and beat Pridwell at Action on his first of the does he is best watched. Training problems have prevented Relitical reacting the top and his only run in the best part of three years was when beatin cheekly by Coffier Bay (same terms) in a technol time-horse race at Towcester in February. This might be asking a bit much of him, but you couldn't nile out improving youngster Shooting Light, taking a step up in grade of the linsh mane Just Little on her best form.

3.40 BRISTOL NOVICE HURDLE (Grade 2) (CLASS C4 TOTO PROMALEE (13) (SeamLs OF arrel) A P OBrens 11 7 Light Green, Black epockets, Green cap, Black star TEDAL FORCE (27) (C) (Ign 5 Steers) P Hobbs 8 TI 7 . . Dark Have and Emergiti Green (halved). Dark Blue sleeves, hooped cap 53-021 JET BOYS (15) (D) (The Jet Staturery Company) May J Pitman 7 Ti 4 . . . A P McCoy Gold, Black hoop, hooped cop LORD JIM (7) (Wis S Y Thomas) J Old 5 ft 4 _ . Purple, Yellow diamonds on sieeves, quartered cap FOT-TI EASY FEELIN (12) (M.P.Burles 5th Femily Settlement) D Nicholson 5 11 0 ... R Johnson Emerald Green and White diamonds, chevrons on sterves PF-F22 MACMORRIS (USA) (22) (Reymond Tools) D Nicholson 4 ti 0 R Thorned Grey Pink equilits, quantered cap OLD ROUVEL (USA) (15) (Mrs R D Cover) D Murray Smith 6 11 0 Dark Blue, Pink and Dark Blue halved steeves. Pink cap 625-62 STORMY SESSION [15] (Overlopher Haycock) N Twiston-Dames 7 ft 0 ___ .C Llermilly Yellow, Dank Blue disc. Yellow sliveves, Dark Blue spots, Red cap THIRTY BELOW (41) (D) (GB Reong) M Chapman & D C ... Red, Light Bise chevron, armies and cap

SETTING: 7-4 Promises, 3 Easy Feetin, 11-2 Tidal Force, 7 Lord Jim, 8 Jet Boys, 10 Macroomis 14 Old Bouwsi, 26 Otomby Session, 33 Thirty Below

- 9 declared -

1995. Terrs Bridge 5 to 4 J Mages 10-1 (C Mann) 9 ran FORM GUIDE

FORM GUIDE

Aidan O'Brien and Charles Swan are tine Pipe and McCoy of Ireland and they look to have a winner here with PROMALEE on his first attempt over three miles. It was no real surprise when Promelee was betwen by Freshered Leader in a grade one hurdle over two miles at Parryhouse to days ago because he needs at least two and a half miles to be seen at he best. Hed been an easy winner of the two and-a-half-mile Morischield Hurdle on heavy ground to Novan the time before his pedignes suggests three miles is well within his scope. Easy Feelin has created a very isveurable impression in his two runs since coming from freiand and is neady for the step up in grade and distance. We haven't seen the best of him yet and he should be a very log danger. Also stepping up in trip is Tidal. Force, who has put the arrics of his opening run of the season firmly behind him with four straight wers, the latest here from subsequent scorer Song Of The Sword over only three and a half furfongs less. While he should stay, he may lack the class of Promalee under his penalty, Jed Soya tize no stamma womes and made all to beat Old Rouvel, who was held up some way off the pace, over this trip to Newbury. He tackles stronger company today, Maemorris is getting closer as he gains in experience and goes up in trip, but a better prospect is Lord Jim, a Flar stayer who made a winning start over hurdles in a two-miler at Chepslow last Saurday and Realy to be better suited by this trip stomy Season represents a stable trus has a good record here in the past but has not yet really got amonget the winners this season.

HAYDOCK

HYPERION 12.40 French Holly 1.15 Barnageera Boy 1.45 Sesame Seed

2.15 The Grey Monk 2.50 Splendid Thyne 3.25 Alka International

GOING: Saft. ● Left-hand course with imposing drop lences and run-in of two furiongs.

■ Course is near junction of A580 and M8. Newton station 2m. ADMISSION: County Stand ETY, Tattersalis ETO, Newton Stand ES (QAPs half-price in Tattersalis and Newton

Stand E17, Tattersalis E10, Newton Stand E5 (CAP's half-price in Tattersalis and Newton Stand) CAR PARK: Free

LEADING TRAINERS: G Richards 23-93 (24.7%), N Twiston-Davies 18-65 (27.7%), Mrs M Reveley 13-62 (21%), D Nicholson 12-51 (23.5%), J Pitz-Gerald 10-41 (24.4%).

LEADING JOCKEYS: I, Wyer 5-56 (14.5%), P Niven 8-64 (25.5%), W Marston 6-39 (15.4%) R Garritty 5-35 (14.3%), R Supple 4-18 (22.2%), J A McCarthy 3-8 (37.5%).

FAVOURTIES: 133-38 (418%).

LINKERED FIRST TIME: Nove.

1	2.40	OLD HALL COUNTRY CLUB NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS D) \$3,700 added 2m Penalty Value £3,102
		D) £3,700 added 2m Penalty Value £3,102
1	1	FOUNDRY LANE (38) (CD) (A Sharrett) Mrs M Reveley 6 ft 6 P Minus
2	263-1	FRENCH HOLLY (USA) (27) (U) IK Flood) F Murphy 6 tl 6
3	5D-	A DAY ON THE DUB (257) (The try Syndexted T Take 4 11 0 K Johnson
4		AGHAWADDA GOLD (The My Syndicate) T Tale 5 ft 0
5	14/20 -	BALLAD MINISTREL (276) (D) (G E Shouler) J FitzGorald 5 fl 0
8	3	BEND WAYY (21) (A J McDonald) T Caldwell 5 11 0
7	4	COMPASS POINTER (9) (R Carstare) J Eustace 4 11 0
В	32.	FOREVER NOBLE (315) (Mrs Florence C Ratter) M Hammond 4 tl 0 R Garritry
3	040-	KNIGHT'S CREST (364) (G Husby) R Dickin 7 11 0 X Aizpuru (5)
TÚ	4	LORD HASTIE (USA) (F161) (Mrs Joy Bendall) N Tarker 9 11 0
π	22	LORD RICHFIELD (NZ) (16) (Hams Associates) S Brookshow 6 to 0 T Eley
12	50	SEVEN MILE GALE (25) (M Birrington) G Richards 5 11 0
*	0-5	TAJAR (USA) (16) (The Veg Chel Partnershot) T Keddy 5 TI 0 J Goldstein (7)
*4	0.0	CAROL AGAIN (21) (J G Lumsden) N Bycroft 5 10 9 B Grattan (5)
15		FUNKY (38) (K Hind) F Jordan 4 10 3
16	0.0	LUCYS RED SLIPPER (8) (P J Jones) P Jones 5 O 9

SETTING: 7-4 French Holly, 9-4 Foundry Lant, 7-1 Forever Noble, 8-1 Selfad Winstrel, 9-1 Lord Richfield, 14-1 Bend Wavy, 16-1 Compans Pointer, 20-1 others

1	.15	PETROS HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS B) £10,000 added 2m Penalty Value £6,788 BBC1
1	323-31	NATIVE MISSION (14) (CD) (G E Shouler) J FitzGarald 10 11 11
2	3F31-3	FLYING INSTRUCTOR (29) (CD) (Lady Lyol) P R Webber 7 11 8
3	41343-	WEE RIVER (252) (D) (Sean Gratram) G M Moore 8 11 4
4	F631-2	POLITICAL TOWER (27) (D) (BF) (G R S Nexon) R Nexon 10 11 4
5	333-23	BARINAGEERA BOY (22) (0) (Mrs C S Wilson) W Jenies 8 10 3

- 5 declared -BETTING: 7-4 Flying Instructor, 9-4 Native Mission, 11-2 Wee River, 6-1 Political Tower, 8-1 Bar-

12.05 Sounds Like Fun 12.35 Verldlan 1.10 Cran-

don Boulevard 1.40 Jultara 2.10 Star Rage 2.45

Course is east of town off the A638 (M16 Jots 3 & 4). Bus link

from Doncaster Central station. ADMISSION: Club £14; Tattersalis

● LEADING TRAINERS: Mrs M Revoley 14-66 (21,2%), J

● LEADING JOCKEYS: W Marston 4-21 (19%), J R Kavanagh 3-18 (15.8%), E Cellingham 6-21 (14.3%), M Ørennam 3-25 (12%)

12.05 BURROUGH HILL LAD NOVICE CHASE (CLASS D) £5,000 added 2m 3f 110yds

4Pm-2 SOUNDS LIKE FUN (16) Miss H Knight 8 m 2 F Titing 50PQF STAUNCH FRIEND (14) M Tompkins 6 m 2..... D Gallagher

- 6 declared BETTING: 13-8 Sounds Like Fun, 7-2 Staunch Friend, 4 Nastrville Star, 11-2 Fryup Salelitia, 7 Dandle Imp, 12 Our Kris

FitzGaraid 7-50 (14%), T Easterby 5-18 (33.3%), G Richs

WEE RIVER, game and genuine and a sound jumper, won first time out two seasons ago and could be the answer to the knotty handcap, wee fever never threatened the principals when third to Down The Fell in the field flum Handicap Chase (2m) at Ambree principals when third to Down The Fell in the Red Rum Handicap Chase (2m) at Amtree in April and seemed to find the extended 19 furings too tar at Doncaster the time before. But he previously ran a goed second (of four) to Certainly Strong at Sandown to-lowing a decreive win from Regal Bomper and Lord Doncet at Kelso, Native Misselon has looked sweet as a nut in two starts this year and his Newbury defeat of Mister Oddy and Certainly Strong gives him a great chance. On the other hend, he does not always find as much as seems likely and the Newbury win was his first for three years. Frying instructor ran a cracking race in the Arkis Chase at Cheltonhem last March, frietning just over eight lengths behind Or Royal in fourth, and was also holding every chance when falling three but behind Multigan at Aintrea. He might just have needed the run when third to Call Equiname in a Cheltonham handicap a month ago and looks better than Political Tower and Barrasgeers Boy.

TOTE PLACEPOT HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS BBC1 B) £10,000 added 2m 4f Pensity Value £6,691 203-25 MISTINGUETT (14) (C) (John Duggari N Teston-Davies 5 11 10 _ ____ Goldstein (7) Royal Blue, Change hoop, Orange sleaves, Royal Blue armiess, quantiered cap 2000-6 MASTER BEVELED (14) (Mrs E J Williams) P Extre 7 O 12..... Dark Blue, Pink atts: Dark Blue stockes, Pink stars, Pink cap, Dark Blue star #50-11 SESAME SEED (7) (D) (Regiment Tools) N Henderson 9 10 9 ______ A Thornton
Groy, Pink epowlets, queriesed cap
151-2 MGBL/S LAD (7) (D) (N C Durangton) P Heatern 3 O 4 ______ Mi Foster Dark Blue and Yallow chamonsts, Yallow stoewes TOP CEES (F9s) (BF) (Charlion Bloodsinck Ltd) Mrs J Ramedat 7 10 0 ... Plant and Red dismonds, What shower, Red ormest

courts, Yellow streves, Dark Blue seams, Light Blue cap. Yellow diamond /1003 THROWER (149 (CD) (EF) (Mark Owen) S Brookshaw 6 10 0 X Alzpuru (5) - 5 declared -

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weights: Top Coes Sul 13th, King Pin Sul 12th, Deyman Sul 11th, RETTING: 5-2 Secome Seed, 100-30 Top Gree, 4-1 Nigni's Lad, 8-1 Mintingrott, King Pin, 12-1 Mas-

FORM GUIDE NIGEL'S LAD ran' well over two miles – a trip thethy a bit sharp for him – when second to Dr Bones at Wetherby last Saturday. Patrick Hastam's yard has not been in the best of form, but thet run should have set up Niget's Lad a treat for today. This learn-going front-numer won three from five lost season as well as finishing a fair fifth to Midnight Legend in the Seagram Top Novlees' hurdle at Aintree, where he made most until outpaced from the second last. He carries 10st 4th compared to the 11st 7th at Watherby and he landed three whits on the Flat this year – looking good when allowed to dominate. Seasine Seed has won two from two this season and quickaned nicely clear of Holdimchose at Chepstow last Saturday, He loves soft ground. Top Cees was a ten-length writter of the Chester Cup and lound only Tumpole too good in the Cesarewitch when conceding 18th. He looks well hendicapped over hurdles on that sort of form and would wanter of the Chester Cup and found only fumpole to good in the Lesarewatch when conceding 16th. He looks well handcapped over hurdles on that sort of form and would have to be feared if there is a market move. King Pin promised much less season and his detect of Papersing at Ayr in January shows that he is capable of smart form in ord ground. He will go on to make a chaser. Thrower may have had enough for the time be-ing and Mistinguett will need to be on top of her game to concede the weight, espe-cially as she is usually best forcing the pace. She is back to a more suitable trip after looking a non-stayer in a Grade Two three-mile hurdle won by Go-Informal at Newbury two weeks ego.

2.15 TOMMY WHITTLE CHASE (CLASS B) £40,000 BBC1 added 3m Penalty Value £26,710 R1.34 COMMERCIAL ARTIST (408) (II) (L.A. Morgan) D. McCan II II 2. T Junio

BETTING: 8-11 The Grey Monk, S-2 Rough Quest, 100-30 Coulton, 90-1 Commercial Artist

Continues 6-11 Time Grey Monis, 5-2 Rough Queet, 100-30 Coultion, 50-1 Commercial Artist
FORM GUIBE
The reappearance of THE GREY MONK and Rough Queet has been cagerly awaited.
The Grey Monis, plunged on for the Gold Cup, needs some cut to the ground end Cordon Bichards says he will by pass the Postival if the going at not straible. The british jumper certainly has a classly took and as third best in the Gold Cup market behind Dorans Pride and Stary Blay - two more mudarks. He goes well when fresh libeat Jodann's Ayr first time up last season) and best Terao over two miles and a half here in February. Perhaps his best effort was his fined one when third to Mudahm in the Irish Grand National at Faryhouse when carrying tost. There must be plenty in left in the tank nisk any. Perhaps has best effort was his fined one when third to Muctahim in the Irish Grand National at Fauryhouse when carrying tost. There must be plently in left in the tank given the way he he has been campained since switching to fences and he was still bombing along when a light-ence later in a Grade One chase won by Denois at Leopardstown last February. Hough Quest is reported in good form and he has appearantly done it has bit of work, but he is bound to come on for this first race since second to One Main on ground too fast in the King George on Boding Day. He will be 12 next birthday but has not had that much reong and the 1996 Recing Post Handicap and Grand Nestonel winner are a nine race in between when second to Imperial Call in the Gold Cup. Coutton missed the second half of last season (leg vigury) and had also had a bettack Imissing three weeks works before his third to Cool Dawn at Ascot three weeks ago. He ran a good race but the trip is probably a bit farther than ideal.

Selection: THE GREY MONK

2.50 St. HELENS COLLEGE HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS C) \$5,000 added 2m 7f 110yds Penalty Value £3,534

-9 declared Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weight: Prueste Set 10tb.

BETTING: 11-4 Splondid Thyne, 7-2 Campaign, 4-1 Better Times Ahead, 11-2 Five Flags, 7-1 Hood-winker, 8-7 Ht. The Carves, 10-1 Mr Christio, 12-1 Prussis, 14-1 Lien De Familie

3.25 STANLEY RACING CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS' HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS E) £3,000 added 2m Penalty Value £2,222 BETTING: 15-8 Riverburá: Rose, 5-2 Quango, 4-1 Turecto, 9-2 Stram, 7-1 Afka international

2.45 FORGIVE'N'FORGET MAIDEN CHASE (CLASS D) £5,000 addad 2m 110yds 25-12 BEACON FLIGHT (34) (BF) 8 Ce Haan 6 O 8 B Powell

- 9 declared mum weight: 10st. True harrificap weight: Take Cover 9st 12/b BETTING: 1 Disallowed, 4 Fairly Starp, 5 Dans Polist, 8 Bescon Figits, 7 Crendon Boulevard, 6 Jackson Park, Teelsynhalich, 12 Tale Cover. 20

1.40 NEVILLE CRUMP MEMORIAL H'CAP CHASE (CLASS B) £10,000 added 3m 2f DIFC GREY SMOKE (34) Mas H Kright 7 11 O ____ JFTBley FATHER SKY (26) (CD) O Sherwood 8 ft 9 ... M Richards B -11F12 SYMBOL DF SUCCESS (7) (BF) D Williams 6 100 ...

-7 declared -Meanum weight: 10cl. True handings weight: Symbol Of Success Set 8th. BETTING: 5-2 Julians, 7-2 Lord Of the West, 4 Symbol Of Success, 15 Grey Smoke, 7 Father Sky, 8 Domaine De Pron, 9 Bevard Dieu

BETTRKS: 3 Veridian, 7-2 Moon David, 5 Trojan Mark, 7 Opaques, Royal Solmbar, 8 Gone For A Bunton, 10 Society Magic, 12 Double Star, 14 Hazard A Guess, Florentino, 20 others 1.10 RACING CHANNEL HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS C) £5,000 added 2m 4f 2.10 SEA PIGEON HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS B) £7,000 added 2m 110yds 31-1F6 DESALLOWED (27) (CD) D Nobleon 4 Ti D., Life O McPhall (7) 023-40 ROYAL MOUNTBROWNE (7) (D) Miss M Rowland 6 Ti 6 . . . -21626 RANGETRED (NZ) (15) (D) C Marti 8 10 D J Margen (2)

Maximum weight: 10st. True handious weights: New Inn 9st 4th, Rangellei Ret. BETTING: 5-4 Star Rage, 5-2 New Jon, 7-2 Karabi, 7 Ramphilat

- 7 declared -BETTING: 4-6 Classy Lad, 7-2 Desert Brave, 4 Global Legend, 20 Star-3.20 DONCASTER STANDARD OPEN NH FLAT (CLASS H) £1,500 added 2m 110 yds

PLAT (CLASS H) £1,500 added 2m110yds

1 PRESCENTREE (82) (D) A Carrol 4 n n Ar D McPhar (7)

1 CUEENSWAY (212) (D) J Robberd 5 n n ... Callegham

10 McHASAHE OPESTEEM (27) (D) 5 Godings 8 n 8 ... Bir S Durrok (5)

30 ALTUARN BLINDER (30) A Carrol 5 n 1 ... L Callegham

4 CASUAL CALL (34) T Essemby 5 n 4 ... R McGrath (3)

PLECREFJORD J Harrason 5 n 4 ... J R Kavenagh

6 CHECY TOUCH (30) W Mar 4 n 4 ... M Richards

6 MrSSED CALL (50) M Tomplans 5 n 4 ... D Gaillegher

NORTH MOSS J Norton 4 n 4 ... Mr Houstop (7)

SWEEP GENTLY Mrs 5 5 mn 5 n 4 ... Mr Houstop (7)

SWEEP GENTLY Mrs 5 5 mn 5 n 4 ... Michael Brunnia (1)

707 TREP YOUR TREGGER (851) C Grant 8 n 4 ... R Supple

HONG KONG CLASSIC R Palvey 4 n 10 ... A S Smith

JAMMAC J Warnery 15 n 10 ... W Dwars

MAZEZOM J Herbron 5 n 0 n ... T Skidali (7)

3-03 ORANGE IMP (19.) J FracGenial 4 n 12 ... M Brennan

— 18 decland

LINGFIELD

DONCASTER

Classy Lad 3.20 Queensway

Left-hand, prer-shaped course.

£8; Silver Ring £3. CAR PARK: Free.

● FAVOURITES: 80-211 (379%).

GOING: Good

12.30 Harbet House 1.00 Sophie May 1.30 Buddy Marvel 2.00 Fiddling The Facts 2.35 Miss Diskin 3.10 Dutch Dyane 3.40 Ivory Coaster GOING: Hurdles - Soft (Good to Soft in places, Heavy in bok straight); Chases - Soft (Good to Soft in places) Left-hand, sharp undulating course. Run-in of 200yds.

© Course is SE of fown on B2028. Lingfield station (served by London, Victoria) adjoins course. ADMISSION: Members 513, Famdon, Victorial adjoins course, ADMISSION: Member: ily Enclosure (9 CAR PARK: Club (3) remainder free ● LEADING TRAINERS: G L Moore 9-32 (28.1%), J Gifford 9-40 225%), M Pipe 9-47 (191%), J Old 7-23 (304%)

 LEADING JOCKEYS: D Bridgwater 17-43 (256%), N Williamson 8-40 (20%), P Hide 8-23 (261%), C Liewellyn 4-24 (16.7%). **▲ FAVOURITES: 147-325 (45.2%)** BLINKERED FIRST TIME: None.

12.30 TANDRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS C) \$4,850

A second of the s

18-454 JACKSON PARK (30) (C) T Easterby 4 109..... E Collegion BETTING: 8-4 Riparios, 15-8 Cool Gunner, & Danegold, Harbet House,

FAIRLY SHARP (43) J Mackle 4 TO 11

12.35 DONCASTER RACECOURSE SPON- 8 SORSHIP CLUB NOVICE HURDLE 9

(CLASS E) £3,000 addad 2m 110ydb 25-33 DOUBLE STAR (18) JL Hamts 8 10 12. _____ J Supple FLORENTINO (752) Mas V Ward 4 10 12. ____ L Cummins (5) (P) GENERAL HAVEN (21) M Soversby 4 10 12. ___ E Callaghan 34/3 GONE FOR A BURTON (14) P Malor 7 10 12. ____ A S Smith 30/2 HAZARD A GUESS (F110) B Rothwell 7 10 12. ____ A S Smith 0F-04 JOLLY HEART (14) D Brenchan 7 10 12. ____ A B Powell NEWBRIDGE BOY (F30) M Mesopher 4 10 12. ____ R Bullariny 0F) NOTERNS TO 17 (27) C Mortock 6 10 12. ____ Mr C Benner (3) O DRAUGE F504 M Streets 4 12.

(CLASS E) £3,000 addad 2m 110yds

1.00 PEAK HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS C) £6,300 added 2m 4f 110yds 1131- CARIBOO GOLD (216) (D) K Balley 8 11 10_N WIRESTERN B OF 11-2 TENNEN (FR) (15) (D) (8F) T Forster 6 11 8 S Wymne P-2236 MONKS SOHAM (21) (D) G Hubbard 9 ft 4 P Carbary

- 4 declared ↔ Minimum weight: 10st. Trun handicap weight: Sophie May 9st 13th. BETTING: 15-8 Cariboo Gold, 9-4 Telmin, 3 Sophie May, 4 Montes So-

1.30 TJH GROUP SUMMIT JUNIOR HURDLE (Grade 2) (CLASS A) £14,500 added 3YO

11 BUDDY MARVEL (28) (D) O Sherwood 1) 2.......P Carbany 222312 PRAIRIE MINSTREL (USA) (24) (D) R Dooin 10 12 S Wysme 40 ZAFARELLI (56) J Jenions O 12. _ ___ P Hide

- 5 declared -BETTING: 4-6 Buddy Marvet, 7-4 Ambge, 12 Prairie Minstrel, 14 Kings-down Trbs, 33 Zafarelli BETTING: 5-2 Sall By The Stars, 11-4 Kamikaze, 3 Flippence, 4 Sister

2.00 LAMBERT FENCHURCH DECEMBER NOVICE CHASE (Grade 2) (CLASS A) £19,500 added 3m

342/1 OTTOWA (18) (0) PNchols 7 ft 7 PHide 210-1P THE PROMS (29) (C) (D) N Twiston-Caves 8 Tr 4 C Maude V 233-2 EMERALD STATEMENT (10) (D) D Grassil 7 ft () . B Feston 34530F JOKER JACK (1) (C) R Deen 12 ft () T Descombs 16231- FIDDUNG THE FACTS (240) (D) N Henderson 6 (0.9 X Withgreson

-5 declared -BETTING: 13-8 Ottown, 15-9 Emerald Statement, 5-2 Fidding The Facts,

2.35 TJH GROUP LINGFIELD PARK LIMITED HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS C) £8,300 4F04-1 KAMIKAZE (31) (D) K Baley 7 tl 7 N Withernson 8 COPU- SISTEM STEPHANIE (238) (D) (BF) G McCount 8 11 8 ...

6P21-4 MISS DISKIN (14) R Buckler 6 107 P Holley - 5 declared -Ost 7to True handicap weights: Pappance 10st 4th, Soll By The Story 10st 4th, Miss Distan 8st 13th

3.10 TESTERS FREELANDER NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS E) £2,925 edded 2m 3f 110yds

DASHARAN (FSI) I Willows 4 to 12. D Bridgweiger
PZUL- DIAL OR BUST (222) J Jerkens 6 to 12. P Carberry
64 ELAMENT (10) (SF) 8 Petrce 5 O 12. Lessa Long
65 FIRE BALL (10) F Doumen (Fr) 4 to 12. Mr T Doumen (5)
1-30 JUST MR (6) MS L Richards 4 to 12. P Holley
60-40 KARACHI (6) J Joseph 7 O 12. L Harvey
P LIATHACH (23) D Thom 6 to 12. P Hidle
DZI L INST THE DAMAGE (271) NEW MINISTERS 5 TO

1521 LINET THE DAMAGE (271) NEW MINISTERS 5 TO DEZI - LINET THE DAMAGE (231) MES V WHEN'S 5 TO 12 CONSO. SHARIJAKAHSKOI (246) J King 5 10 12. D J Kovernegh (5)
1-2PD THE KERSTY LEDGENO (6) N Charce 4 10 2. P Rysin (7)
1005- THIGHSTIM LAD (277) J Bernett 5 0 2. C Maude
17 TORSONS COMET (700) M Parters 9 10 12. D Byrne
18 CRURSING FREE (53) L MORSQUE Hall 8 0 7. S Wystele
2 DUTCH DYANE (12) G Erroph 4 0 7. B Fortion
14 declared -

- 14 dectaned -BETTING: 5-6 Fire Ball, 9-2 Desharan, 8 Limit The Demage, 16 Detch Dyane Just Nip, Sharlekannet, 26 Blo-Hent, 25 others - 14 declared

3.40 LEVY BOARD HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS D) £3,650 added 2m 3f 110 yds TOTAL TICKERTYS GET (15) (CD) GL MODET 7 II 2 M Batcheter (7)
4222: MORY COASTER (MZ) (17) B De Haan 6 TO D. C Mandre
PSO-6 BOTTCLETE COURT (9) J Alebrard 5 TO D. N Wellington
2252: HANDY LASS (23) (D) J Smith 8 TO D. Mr J Ticzard (5)
1034- JOYIE KING (201) (B) R Bucker 5 TO Sophie Mitches (9)

5 declared - 5 dec

CHELTENHAM 1.55: ESCARTEFIGUE, formerly

a smart staying hurdler and two lengths second to Paddy's Return in as Grade One contest over 3m at Punchestown on his final outing over timber last season, will need further than today's trip of 2m5f to be seen at his best but showed eoough when beating Denham Hill by six lengths over 2m41110yds at Worcester on his chasing debut 10 suggest he should outclass today's rivals. Northern Starlight mby pose most problems.

2.30: SIMPLY DASHENG, who recovered from a ninth fence blunder, which must have cost him 10 lengths, to storm bome an impressive five lengths winner from Fine Thyne (6lb better off today) in the 2m4f1 10yds First Bank Gold Cup Limited Handicap Chase at Ascol in November, looks a lop class chaser in the making should confirm those placings providing he puts in a clear round today.

ly to find little off the bridle.

Force may prove the danger.

HYPERION'S

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 $c = \sqrt{1/(\log k)}$

3.05: COLLIER BAY, the 1996 Champion Hurdle winner, was pulled up in last March's renewal but, if be can recapture his former sparkle, could prove 100 strong for these rivals. Pridwell has been in great form this season but drops back to a trip which might now be a bit short for him and is still like-

3.40: PROMALEE, four lengths second to Feathered Leader over an inadequate 2m in the Grade Oce Avonmore Waterford Royal Bond Novice Hurdle at Fairybonse last time, is a smart staying oovice hurdler and can stage a successful raid from Ireland. Tidal

TV TIPS

L.15: Paul Webber's stable has struggled to find its form so far this season but Flying Instructor still has a major chance here. This promising seven-year-old won on good going here last February and a recent outing a Cheltenham will bave put him right for this. Notive Mission, proven in the mud, beat two useful rivals 3t Newbury last time, but the ex-Irish BAR-NAGEERA BOY should be fully acclimatised now and can make his weight advantage tell.

1.45: Nicky Henderson failed to gain a win from four runners yeslerday but his stable has nevertheles beeo to brilliant form of late. SESAME SEED, unbeaten so far this term, has been raised 81b for his latest comfortable success but his style of racing - he's beld up for a late run - means he can defy the bandicapper. The strong gallop likely to be set by Mistinguett should play into the bands of the favourile.

2.15: Coulton is classy and but there is a question mark over his stamioa for this journey. A slow early pace could well set the race up for him. Peter Niven, who rides THE GREY MONK, is unlikely to make such a mistake, however, and the nine-year-old is difficult to oppose over his best distance on his favourile track. Rough Quest, who is now rising 12, may well be rusty after his long lay-off.

TRIPLEP	RINT	GO	LD	CUP	- 10	-YE	AR-T	ALE		
	1987	28	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96
Fate of the favourities:	4	2	3	A	1_	3-6	В	Р	Α_	_1
Wirmer's place in betting	o: 21t	2	2jt	A	1	D	D	2	Α_	1
Starting-prices:	10-3		4-1	A	7-4	11-2	14-1	10-3	A	7-4
Witner's age:	В	7	9	A	В	8	В	В	A	В
Profit or lose to £1 stak	e: Few	ourk	14 -E2	50 S	conc	Favo	urites	+25	50	
Percentage of winners									_	
Shortast-priced winners	k King	Fou	ntain	(1991)	& Adt	ingtor	Boy	(1996)	7-4	
Longest-priced winner:										
Top trainens: T Forster (2 G Richards	- Pe	gwg0	Bay (1988)	S Dub	An Fly	er (199 en Boy	94) / (1996	3	
Top Jocksy: 8 Powell (2										

FIRST SHOW

Simply Dashing is a top-priced 5-2 with William Hill for the (2.30) Tripleprint Gold Cup Handicap Chase at Cheltenham - the Tole offer just 2-1 about 3-1 - while the mud-loving Tim Easterby's representative.

Cheltenham - 2.30 Sloughy Deathing 94 52 94 2-1 Trying Again 41 41 7-2 9-2 Challenger Du Luc 5-1 92 92 5-1 Fire Thyrin 6-1 11-2 8-1 5-1 Senor El Betrutti 7-1 13-2 7-1 7-1 Marior Bell 13-2 8-1 7-1 6-1 16-1 16-1 20-1 20-1 Destry D'Estruval 20-1 16-1 22-1 20-1 Bells Life 20-1 20-1 25-1 20-1

Each way, a 6th the points, places 1, 2, 3 C - Corat H - William Hill L - Lactordes, T - Total

Haydock - 1.45 Sesame Seed 94 94 2-1 94

114 103 7-2 103 41 103 72 31 Nigeria Leci 81 91 91 81 Mistroguet 9-1 8-1 8-1 8-1 Doymes 14-1 12-1 12-1 14-1 Mastex Bevoled 11-1 12-1 12-1 14-1 2-1 2-1 14-1 14-1 Each way, a lith the oxids, places 1, 2 3

C - Coral H - Wilson Hill L - Lachroles, T - Tole

12.10: 1. SOUND APPEAL (A Thornton)
12-1; 2. Real Estate 3-1; 3. The French
Fuzze 4-5 fav. 13 ran. 11. 9. (A Foster, Lambourn). Tother: \$2.26; (2.540, C.1.30, C.1.0, DF;
£1960. CSF: £44.90. Tho: \$410. 12.45: 1. EDGEMOOR PRINCE (R Dun-

Tota: £210. DF: £150. CSF: £322. 1.20: 1. DAWN LEADER IC Lieuphy

1.88: 1. YORKBHIRE GALE (N Williamson) 3-1 it fav; 2. Stormtracker 3-1 it fav; 3. Avro Anson 7-2 5 ran. 24, 15 (J Gifford Findon) Tota: £310; £150 £170 DF: £420 CSF: £1063

2.30:1. TIBSTAN (R Durwoody) 9-4 it lav: 2. Barna Boy 7-1. 3. Mister Rm 7-1. 7 ran. 9-4 jr fav Doctoor (pulled up) 1/1. 4 (Lady Harnes, Littlehampton) Rote: 5340, 5180, 5280 DF: \$1280, CSF: \$1700.

3.05: 1. YEOMAN WARRIOR (A Gentity) 7-1: 2. Flapjeck Lad 14-1: 3. Pongo Warling 9-4 jt lav 8 ran. 9-4 jt lav Whit Impunity Jurisealed nder). 30. 11 IR Rove, Storington). Tole: 59:30: 63:00. 62:50. DF: £4:80. CSF:

2. Runaway Pete 15-1: 3. Smith Too 12-1 12 ran. 11-8 fay Mentmore Towers (fel) 7. 15. [M Pipe Wesington) Total: \$4.00; \$2.00. Jackpot: Not won, \$7562.01 carried forward to Chekenham today. Placepol: £42050 Quadpol: £14130

Place 6: £475.72 Place 5: £41004 DONCASTER

1.00: 1. CASH FLOW (P Carberry) 4-1: 2. Spring Gale 1-3 fav; 3. Torus Spa 8-1 4 ran. 7. det (J.J O'Neil, Pennih), Tota: £230 DF £150, CSF: £5.79

1.35: 1. UN POCO LOCO (G Lee) 20-1. 2. Guthury 10-1. 7 ran. 4. /r. (Mrs.) Brown Malton). Rote: £28,60. £750. £180. DF: £38,90. CSF: £51,23. 2.10: 1. POTTER'S BAY (R Thomson) 3-1. 2. apeaker Weatherill 5-8 tav. 3. Garminn 7-1 4 ram. 17-6. [O Nicholson, Temple Gui-ting), Total: C370, DF: £250, CSF: £561

In the (1.45) Tole Placepot Handicap Hurdle at Haydock. Nigels Lad is 4-1 with Coral the Tote offer a more cautiuos Master Beveled is available at 14-1 with the Tote - Coral go 11-1.

In the (3.05) Bula Hurdle at Cheltenham, Reikeel is available at 7-1 with Ladbrokes - the Tote are offering only 5-1 - while Just Little is 25-1 with Ladbrokes - Coral and the Tole go The rank outsider Moorish

can be backed at 66-1 with. Coral - Ladbrokes offer a more conservative 33-1.

Ian Davies

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Chelte	enhan	ı — 3.0)5
Horse	н	L	T
rideal	13-8	5-4	15-8
arge Action	4-1	7-2	4-1
Coller Bay	41	9-2	4-1
Tellingi	13-2	7-1	5-1
Shooting Light	7-1	7-1	8-1
Эктопу	9-1	8-1	8-1
Just Little	16-1	25-1	16-1
Acorish .	_ 68-I	50-1	33-1
Each way a l	Th the original		_

RESULTS

CHELTENHAM

12.45; 1. EDGEMOUN PRINCE (H Dun-woody) 13-8; 2. Yahmi 10-11 lav. 3. Robsand 5-1. 3 ran. Hd, dist. (P Hobbs, Minehead). 11-4; 2. Goodhina Georga 8-1, 3. Percy Crow 33-1, 18 ren, 5-2 fev Mountain Storm (Stit), 4, nk. (J Old, Wroughton), Tote: £390; £UG, £230, £480, DF: £1950, CSF- £2341, Tho: £72321 Trio: £723.20.

2.30: 1. TIBETAN (R Dunwoody) 9-4 jt fav:

3.40: 1. GYSART |A P McCoy) 100-30;

12.30: 1. TABRIZ (O Pears) 3-1: 2. Silent Valley 5-4 tov. 3. Recruitment 13-2 12 ren. 4, 12 (Mrs P Arexn. York) Total E370, £140, £120, £140, £150, £140, £150, £140, £150, £140, £150, £140, £150, £140, £150, £140, £150, £140, £150, £140, £150, £140, £150, £140, £150, £140, £150, £140, £150, £140, £150, £1

ting), Total: EA/N, DF: E250, USF: E251 2.45: 1. GRISEN GREEN DESERT (P Car-berry) 3: 2. Monraise Forth 9-4 fay; 3. Bold Boss 9-2 6 ran. Ns, 11 (O Sherwood, Up-per Lambourn), Total: £270; £170; £160 OF £3 to CSF: £894

3.20: 1. REGAL ABSENCE (A Thorston) 3-1 lav, 2. Sushi Bar 12-1; 3. Wurlitzer 7-1. 14 ram. 21, 7. (O Nicholson, Temple Guit-ing). Tote: £390; £150, £340, £220. DF: £4000 CSF. £3657. Trio: £9840. NR: Geisha. Placepot: £207.20. Quadpot: £48.60. Place 8: £174.26. Place 5: £150.71

H - Willem Hit L - Lackroles, T -- Total

LINGFIELD 12.40: 1. KAILEY SENOR (F Norton) 8-1, 2. Rehasb 7-1; 8. Harlequin Walk 7-1, 11 ran, 13-8 tav Verman (4th) ½, 2º (R.Am-strong), Tota: £12.30; £2.30, £3.50, £1.50, DF: £5650. CSF: £5810. Tricast: £38160. Tric

1.10: 1. CHIPSTEAD BAY (C Scally) 71-10 lav; 2. Just Dissident 9-2; 3. Opening Range 7-2 8 ran. 3. /s. (Kivory, Tota: £190; £110. £140. £150. DF: £470. CSF: £656. Tri-Cast: £14.13.

Cass: 1 M.O.

1.45: 1. MILJA'S MAGIC IN Adams) 10-1:
2. Batchworth Belle +1; 3. Private Scal
3-1 it lav. 7 ran. 3-1 it lav Blue Shadow. Hd.
7. IK hory). Tote: £6.90; £2.70, £2.80 DF:
£1150. CSF: £48.12 2.20: 1. BALI DANCE (N Adams) 12-1;

2. Appyabo 4-1, 3. Lady Laphrosig 12-1 15 ren. 2-1 lav Bow Bels. 2%, 5 (C Booth) Tote: \$12.50; \$3.00, \$2.30, \$4.00 DF; \$15.80, \$65; \$58.81, 7ho; \$138.10 2.55: 1. POLISHED STEEL (P Doe) 9-2; 2. Awesoma Power 11-1; 3. Billiaddie 11-2 8 ran. 11-4 fav Mukhiles, 5, 2% | Lady Harries). Tiote: £4.40; £2.10, £2.10, £2.50, DF: £25.00, CSF £48.22, Trio; £55.30, NR; Twin

3.30: 1. BANZHAF (A Clark) 10-1; 2. Twin 3.50: 1. OARCARAT (A CERK) 10-1.42 AND Creeks 12-1: 3. White Plains 11-8 fav. 12 ran. 1. 1/1: IG L Moore). Tote: £13.30: £3.40. £2.50. £1.40. OF £3.630. CSF: £19.40. The ast: £252.82 Tno, £4440

Placepot: £10310 Quadpot: £6400. Place 6: £26512 Place 5: £9607.



المكتاب الاعل

19/RACING

Dashing lifts Great Habton expectations To Tipy Dashing lifts Great Habton expectations

Easterby once used to strike fear into the hearts of southern trainers.

Now his son, Tim, has a chaser who is reawakening memories of the glory glory days of Night Nurse, Sea Pigeon.

Alverton and Little Owl.

"I wouldn't say I'm superstitious," Tim Easterby says, "hut I don't like tempting provi-

And who can blame him, when he has a borse like Simply Dashing to look after in only his second season with a training beence. It is why he will look think about anywhere else," he no further than today's outing in the Tripleprint Gold Cup at Cheltenham when discussing plans for the six-year-old chaser, but be cannot stop others doing it for him.

Simply Dashing is already a 14-I chance for the Cheltenham and Cup. By this evening, he favourite.

It is quite a responsibility for one so young, and that goes for both trainer and horse. It is fortunate, then, that steeplechasers do not understand ante-post betting, while Easterby has a wealth of experience to call

He inherited the licence at Habton Grange Stables in Malton from bis father, Peter, the only man to train 1,000 winners both on the Flat and over jumps, and while it is now Tim's initials on the saddlecloths, the operation remains a family business.

Tim learnt the trade as his father's assistant for several years, and there was never any question that, when the time a mile still to run, but he recame, he might strike out in a yard of his own. "I didn't ever says. This is the family concern. it's what I've been brought up with and it's what I've always wanted to do."

The internal promotion to the role of licence holder was well-timed, because husiness is on the up for Easterby & Son,

has produced lots of winners, but no headline-grahber of a horse to equal Sea Pigeon, Night

Simply Dashing, at long last, could be the one, judged on his admirable performance under top weight in the First National Bank Chase at Ascot last month. A horrible blunder at the ninth fence seemed to have ruled him out of contention with

Nurse, Alverton or Little Owl.

BY GREG WOOD

covered to win as be pleased.

"When he made that mistake, I said to myself, 'just come back in one piece now and it will be all right, there'll be another day'," Easterby says. "I was so impressed with the way be came back on to the bridle. He's got such a hig heart, and they were some useful borses he and his brother, Mick, arc fawas giving weight to. Horses like mous for their ability not just to Raceborse Trainers. For more that are very bard to find."

the exact destination for Sim- too. ply Dashing this afternoon was unclear, with the Tommy Whittle Chase at Haydock a serious

father and son will he disappointed. "We always get on very well and we make all the decisions together," Tim says. "We discussed everything and decided

for evidence of a rift between

But just suppose, for the sake of argument, that he had favoured Haydock while his fasiders, but the leap of imagilike that would simply never oc-

families would envy, and it ex- Habton licence. tends too to the sales ring. This, even more than the racecourse, is the natural habitat of an Easterby - and both Peter

For much of the last week, an owner to pay for its upkeep

Their legacy is in good bands. "I really enjoy the sales." he says. "There's no set rules to alternative, but anyone looking how we buy horses, sometimes we'll go round together, other times father will buy a horse or I will, but we find that we tend to like the same son of horses. It's just down to instinct, and keeping an open mind."

An economy with words is that this was the best race for another family trait which Tim has inherited in ahundance, particularly when it comes to planning ahead. He would not be normal if he did not have at ther was determined to go to least the rough sketch of a Cheltenham? He pauses, con- route to Cheltenham next March mapped out in his mind, nation is too great "It wouldn't but nothing short of thumbbappen," he says. "A situation screws could persuade him to discuss it.

Then again, he has been It is a comfortable hlending here before, harely two months of the generations which many after he inherited the Great

When Scotton Banks won the Martell Cup at Aintree in 1996, he too was a seven-yearold, as Simply Dashing will he next spring, and his potential seemed equally limitless. Withhuy a bargain, but to then find in a couple of months of the fol-

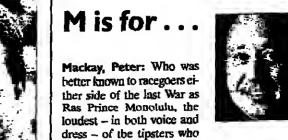


lowing season, though, his form

had collapsed. "That was a huge disappointment," Easterby says. "We found out in the end that he had a problem with his hind suspensory, and he's sound again now and we bope be'll he hunter chasing this season.

"But you have to be prepared for things like that. You always know that when you're having a good do, there's going to be a bad do to come."

It is quite a spectre to have to hanish so early in his training life, but if any horse has the ability to do so, it is Simply Dashing. Supermarkets and chain stores may have taken over the high streets, but on the racecourse at least, a family



frequent attempts to lead in

the winners after big races.

goers a few bours later.

ting shops. If it happens to be your borse that they are

squeezing, and you have not already taken a price, the only

magic involved is of a dis-

Match betting: Once upon

a time, all betting was like

tinctly black bue.

were once a familiar sight on **GREG WOOD** British racecourses. Monolulu's outsized feather headdress and trademark yell of THE A-Z "I gotta horse" added considerable colour to the race-OF BETTING going experience, as did his

Today, sadiy, the only beirs to his theatrical art are the but for the hig off-course chains of bookies-cum-ac-Frank Butcher lookalikes countants, the punting who skulk around the car legend that is JP McManus parks at Ascot and Sandown, is one of the best things to demanding money with mencome along for ages. Betting aces from any punter stupid enough to show an interest in is nothing without bope, and their "special racecards". McManus's frequent killings, Anyone who parts with their particularly at the Cheltenham Festival, give backers cash will invariably find a small envelope inside the everywhere fresh optimism that if they can just keep trycard, containing a "tip" for ing, they will one day reach whichever horse was forecast the same state of gimletto be the hottest favourite of the day in that morning's Raceyed punting nirvana, when ing Post. The same people, the bets are hig, the winnings unsurprisingly, can often be even higger and every gamfound working the three- ble is landed. It is, needless card trick on departing race- to say, not quite that simple. For one thing, McManus is naturally blessed with the Magic Sign: Betting-ring sort of shrewdness and selfslang for Ladbrokes, and one discipline which is very diffiof John McCririck's favourite cult to learn. He is also kept phrases, much to the irrita- exceptionally well-informed, tion of the collective PR deby the trainers who prepare partments of Hills, Coral his own horses and those of and the rest. Do not be de- a close-knit circle of Irish owner-punters, and posceived, though, by the cosy language. When the Magic sessed of enough wealth elsewhere in his business dealings Sign start backing a horse oncourse, it means they are to absorb temporary beavy spending a little money in the losses when - as is often the case - things go wrong. Mcbetting ring in order to sbort-Manus started his career in en up the starting price and save themselves a small forbetting as a bookmaker, and tune in their off-course bet- is fond of remarking that

good bookies make good

punters, and vice versa (well, you know what he means).

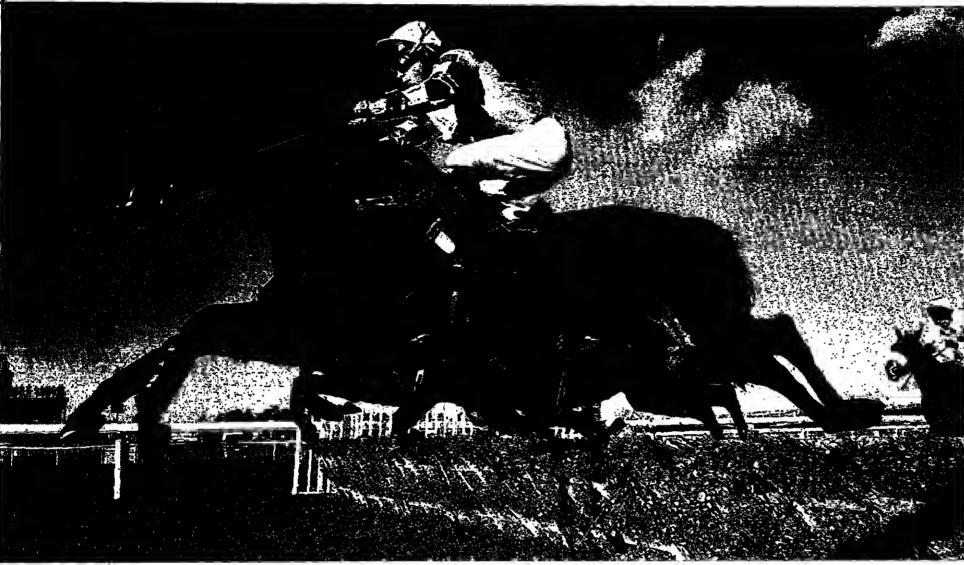
The implication, somewhat

depressingly, is that when it

comes to punting, you've cither got it or you haven't.

And most of us haven't.

this, Horses would turn up for Morphine: Which suddenly a meeting and race two-by- started turning up in dozens two in a series of heats on a of urine samples taken from knockout basis, often with 10 greyhounds when, a year or stone on their hacks and two ago, the dog racing auover anything up to four thorities switched from their miles. In the mid 1770s, howprevious dope-testing proever, the realisation grew cedures to the ultra-sensitive techniques employed by the that testing nothing but the sbeer dogged determination Horseracing Forensic Laboof horses was not doing much ratory in Newmarket. This is not a tale of previously unto improve the breed, and anyway, if you ran them all at suspected skulduggery on an once, you could get better extraordinary scale, however, odds. Modern racing was but rather an indication of bow efficient modern drug born, and match betting pretty much consigned to histotesting can be. On further inry. As if to prove that nothing vestigation, it was discovgoes out of fashion forever, ered that many trainers add though, it is now making bread to their dogs' feed, and something of a comeback, not just any old bread eitber. thanks to spread betting For some, your standard firms who will quote borse X medium-sliced white was to finish, say, two lengths simply not good enough. It abead of horse Y. Some had to be posb stuff, with good judges reckon there is things on top - hlue poppy value to be had in such marseeds, for instance, which ket, but the usual spread-bet contain only the tiniest trace of morphine, but still enough of it to set off the alarms. Unscrupulous chemisis in the Walthamstow and Catford bookmakers who lay his bets on the rails might not agree, areas have been warned.



Early riser: Dawn Leader clears the last to win at Cheltenham yesterday. Rider Carl Llewellyn said later: 'He's one of the best horses I've ever sat on' Photograph: Julian Herbert/Allsport

Pridwell to repay the faith of his loyal supporters

A reformed rogue seeks redemption in the Bula Hurdle at Cheltenham. Greg Wood expects him to atone for his previous

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A THE STATE OF THE

It is the season of goodwill to all - and that, it seems, includes *acehorses. How else to exblain the fact that Pridwell, who has probably been the subject of more betting shop curses than any other borse in training, seems sure to start favourite for the Bula Hurdle at Cheltenham this afternoon?

This is the same Pridwell who was the 7-2 secondfavourite for this very race 12 months ago. When the tapes went up, he planted his feet and refused to move, before finally setting off a hopeless 40 lengths adrift of the field. It only made things worse when he ac-

WOLVERHAMPTON

HYPERION

7.00 Stage Whisper 7.30 Classy Cleo 8.00 UI-

tra Beet 8.30 Democrat 9.00 Anjou 9.30 Moon-

tually managed to pass a coumaking it quite clear that, with any sort of a proper run, he would have gone very close in-

That sort for performance takes a great deal of forgiving. but perhaps the time has now arrived. In his three outings so far this season, Pridwell has yet to come off the hridle in winning by an aggregate of 20 lengths, and perhaps most significantly of all, he has now lost the squiggle by his name in Timeform which is the recognised mark of a mule.

"We try to give them as many chances as we can to keep the squiggle," Martin Greenwood, Timeform's hurdles bandicapper, said yesterday, "but he does seem like a reformed character this year so we had no option but to take it off. If there was a physical problem that we've not yet got to hear a strong European challenge.

about, then be could well be fine of getting used to. Large Action, ple of rivals on the final circuit, for the rest of his career, and last year's winner, is again in the half an hour later is just as inwhen Mr Pipe irons horses out, field, so too Collier Bay, the triguing, with all nine of the runthey usually stay froned out. But now I've said that, he'll probation four more very worthy opbly go and do nothing again to-ponents. It is a fascinating race.

but since only Pridwell Incu-Certainly, for all his appar- best, 3.05) arrives with impecent improvement this year, the cable winning form to his name idea of Pridwell starting so far this season, he (probably) favourite for the Bula takes a hit deserves one more chance.

Luso goes for Sha Tin double

Clive Brittain's Luso will be out to repeat his 1996 success in the ternational Vase. over 12 fur-

drawn 12 has looked on very good terms with himself and is expected to run a very hig race. ston's Bijou D'Inde (Jason Paul Cole's Posidonas

Group Two Hong Kong In- pair, Protektor (fourth last year) longs, at Sha Tin tomorrow. Michael Kinane's mount.

(Richard Ouinn) also has claims on his best form in what looks

European interests are also represented by the German and Oxalagu. Oxalagu has been

champion of 1996, not to men-

heaten just once this seasony. British interests in the Group Two Hong Kong International Cup are Mark John-Weaverland Roger Charlton's Wixim (Kinane). Frankie Dettori's mount is Godolphin's Annus Mirahilis.

JOR BELL (3.40), an 8-1 chance with Hills, who showed excellent form over course and distance when runner-up to Sparky Gayle in the Catheart Chase in March. He has clearly been laid out for this race, and

ners now in the handicap

Coulton at the final declaration

stage. Much attention will be di-

rected at Simply Dashing, and

quite rightly following his im-

pressive performance at Ascot

recently, but while he is a wor-

thy tayourite, a top-priced 5-2

is very short for such a com-

A value alternative is MA-

petitive race.

overnight. The remaining televised

will not be deterred if the

ground has eased further

The Tripleprint Gold Cup is a novice chase and the other ~ a novice hurdle for stayers ~ has at least seven credible winners in its nine-runner field. proper following the removal of Over at Haydock, though, there is plenty to keep punters interested, with Nigel's Lad (1.45) wonly of support in the handicap hurdle, and The Grey Monk (2.15) third-favourite for

RICHARD EDMONDSON NAP: Flying Instructor (Haydock 1.15) NB: Monks Soham (Lingfield 1.00)

the Gold Cup without so much as a run to his name this season, looking to establish himself among the elite in the Tommy Whitele Chase. Rough Quest, the 1996 Grand National winner, is a tough opponent for Gordon Ricbards' grey, but

one that The Grey Monk events at Cheltenham make should overcome on the way to

little betting appeal, since one far hetter things. 9.00 AS YOU LIKE IT SELLING STAKES (CLASS G) 52,500 added 1m 6f 166yds

8.30 BENTLEY JENNISON CHARTERED AC-COUNTANTS HANDICAP (CLASS D) £4,000 added 1m 1f 79yds

BETTING: 5-2 Mehis, 4 haten Symphony: 11-2 Eastern Prophets, 8 Rant-sey Hope, 10 Tekhild, 12 Bold Anstocrat, 14 Mn/Isgh Hill Led, Double-O. Night Harmony, Ultra Baet, 16 Young Bigwig, Gr Le High, 20 Pride Of Brits-

440053 BOLD ARISTOCRAT (22) (D) R Hollmenced 6 9 2 F Lynch 13

040000 GFLA HIGH (11) (C) M Meade 4 9 0 V Statlery 4 605046 NIGHT HARMONY (C2) (D) Mcs S Whon 4 3 8 M Tebbut 10

000000 PRIDE OF BRIDETON (19) C Thorsen 490

DIE- THREADNEEDLE (427) (BF) Lord Humangdon 4 10 G COST DEMOCRATION SE M Presion 39 m (See) C Duffield 2

6255 TOWOURS RIVIERA (28) J Pearce 7.9 IL Wighem B 234.32 MICHT MIRAGE CON (D) M Juniscon 129 Dean McKeown 10 SCE-SE KOMREYEV DANCER (18) (C) 4 Bally 595 K Hodgson 5 TOTAL ONEFORTHEDITCH (SQLICD) I Fareface 4 9 4 T Sprake 1 230-5 YEOMAN OLIVER (40) (CD) = \$100000 491

SOUS CHEROKEE FLIGHT (7) (CD) (BF) 5 Netor 38 TI J Quarte 7 066054 LADY GODAVA (9) M Pragase (17.1) A McCarthy IT) 6 MACH BUIL HOPPER (182) W QUANT - 70 declared -

CCLASS G) £2,500 added 1m 6f 166yds

1 5522 ANDU (18) J Peares 5 87... M Wighten 9

2 232-0 PEARL ANNIVERSARY (14) (C) Mes S Winn 4 83... S Whithworth 2

3 075-46 LE GRAND GOUSIER (7) R J Proc 3 9 0 ... S Whithworth 2

4 02056 ANLACE (1222) S Melor 8 8 2 ... R Perham 8

5 1520 KIRSY OPPORTURITY (14) G Ham 8 8 2 ... S Drowns 5

6 6420 SLIGHTLY OLIVER (279) D Wilsons 3 8 10 ... T Wilsons 4 8

7 00 ELLAMINE (42) D Haytin Jones 3 8 5 ... A Clark 6

8 43-00 HOPPERETTA (116) B Palma 3 8 5 ... T Spreaks 1

9 540-0 MY HERO (116) T Mes 3 8 5 ... J Colonn 7

9 declared - 9 declare 9.30 COMEDY OF ERRORS HANDICAP (CLASS F) £2,700 added 1m 4f

Cup within range for Trying Again



The former National Hunt jockey Steve Smith Eccles (left) gives a runner-by runner analysis of today's Tripleprint Gold Cup.

Simply Dashing: Just keeps Bell's Life: Makes his seaon improving and looks a star sonal re-appearance and will favourite.

wealth warnings still apply.

McManus, JP: The proper

Challenger Du Luc: Ran a Major Bell: Needed his first cracker behind Senor El Betrutti in the Murphy's Gold Cup but then disappointed in a three-runner race won by Callisoe Bay n! Newbury. A good horse on his day but definitely not one to trust.

Senor El Betrutti: Won the Murphy's Gold Cup in fine style over this course. Hunting with the Heythrop has been a part of his preparation.

Trying Again: Ran well in the Hennessy, finishing fifth to Suny Bay, but did not last out the longer trip. He will appreciate this step back in distance.

of the future. He is a worthy probably need the run after his reported set-backs.

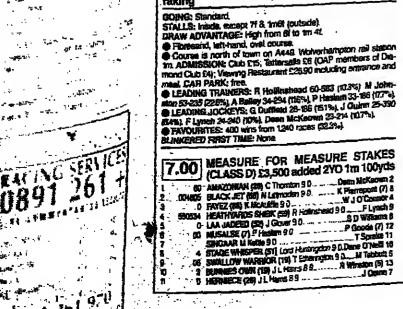
run of the season and should

come on for it. Kadi: He has not visited the winner's enclosure for a while hut he is no mug on his day.

Destin D'Estruval: Fell on his latest start on this track. when looking beaten. He bas a lot on bis plate.

> Fine Thyne: Ran well when runner-up to Simply Dashing in the First National Bank Gold Cup at Ascot.

Conclusion: I reckon that TRYING AGAIN is the one to he on now he is back over his optimum trip,



7.00 MEASURE FOR MEASURE STAKES (CLASS D) £3,500 added 2YO 1m 100yds

12 03 MAKE BELIEVE (178) M Polytes 8 9 ... M Farmer J 13 0 Crisulat (52) H Aktary 8 9 ... J Stack 1 - 12 declared -BETTING: 7-4 Stage Whitapet, 7-2 Hantinyards Shelk, 5 Las Jacked, 8 Fayez, 10 Singuez, 12 Males Believe, 16 Black Jat, Bernales Own, 20 Olemal, 25 Amezonian, 53 others

CHINA BANKNOTE PRINTING & MINT-ING STAKES (CLASS D) £4,000 added

2 YU 7f

1 00001 GRALMANO (14) (C) N Lamoden 32 S Whiterorth 1
2 2023 CLASSY CLEO (15) P Estric 8 71 A McCarthy (7) 5
3 20200 ONE SHIGER (25) (C) N Lamoden 8 71 D Wright 2
4 53054 ARBERTS (25) (C) B Paing 86 STORM TO Wright 2
5 04337 REPULSIVE DECISION (33) M Made 86 Dean McCarthy 3
5 declared BETTING: 45 Classy Cleo, 3 Gralmano, 7-2 One Singer, 12 Arberta, 25 impulsive Decision

8.00 S J DIXON HANDICAP (CLASS D) 000030 YOUNG BIGWIG (39) (C) (D) I C-EE-21 2 17 0 O Pears 11 T Sprains 7 5 J Quinn 2 20227 MALLIA (19) (D) TO SETT. 48 T.

16-2P MILLAGH HILL LAD (154) (C) (SF) N 1-20020 195 STITUTE ULTRA BEET (22) (CD) (EF) 2 - 22 - 5 3 E P Goods (7) 5 V

OFFICE TRALIAN SYMPHONY (3) (CD) F 5/25 23 5 781 A McCardy (7) 1 V

SETTING. 8-11 Democrat. 11-2 One fortheddich. 7 Toujours Riviers. 5 Hight filangs 10 Threadneedle. 12 Cherokee Flight. 14 Yemon Oliver 16 Ledy Goddys. 20 Kommeyer Dencer. 33 Blue Hopper

305031 MOONFAKING (5) (II) T Etherrigian 49 (2 50s) ... W J O'Connor 8
03006 ZERMATT (7) M Usher 79 (0) ... W J O'Connor 8
25000 WENTEREDGE LAD (\$2) (C) A Belay 79 7 ... D Wright 6
20344 WILDERE (5W) (19) (0) J Alethers 69 7 ... A Client 1
5002) MYSTERIUM (155) (C) N Literoden 39 7 ... K Plantacent 71 3 6023 MYSTERIUM (155) (C) N Literaction 3.97

400642 MSRCURY (7) 8 Seugh 4.85

400642 MSRCURY (7) 8 Seugh 4.85

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400030 WILDMOOR (11) (D) John Benry 3.94

M Pertant 2.8

40005 TABASCO JAZZ (7) 8 Meetan 3.91

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40007 Dane O'Neill 9 - 12 deciared -= 12 December - 12 December - 12 December - 12 December - 14 December - 14 December - 15 December - 16 December - 16 December - 17 December - 17 December - 18 December -

The title had already gone to the United States, but the race for next best ran out of steam for one Italian and left a Welshman's

dreams in tatters. Adom Szreter reports from Abu Dhabi on the conclusion of the Formula One **Powerboating World** Championship.

In near-perfect conditions down at The Wavehreaker in the bay they call the Pearl of the Gulf, Scott Gillman of the United States rounded off his first year on the world Formula One powerboat circuit with victory in the final race of the season bere yesterday.

The 40-year-old from Basalt, Colorado, twice the American champion, bad already wrapped up his first title in Europe with a race to spare; yesterday was supposed to be all about second place and the battle between Finland's Pertti Leppala and Guido Cappellini of Italy, with Cappellini's great rival, Jonathan Jones of Wales, trailiog back in fourth overall.

The sight of 24 boats blasting off together from the jetty was an awesome one, as they go from 0-60mph in less than two seconds before reaching a top speed of over 140mph. Cappellini, champion for the past four years, was on pole position and took advantage of the clear water by streaking into a lead of 50 metres by the first turn, about 800m into the L-shaped circuit.

20 of the scheduled 45 laps the Italian's lead was already looking impregnable, with Leppala and Gillman back in the bunch. Then Jones struck trouble.

His engine cut out, and although he managed to restart he had dropped back several places. In his haste he seemed to take a gamble at the last turn of the 24th lap and went into a spectacular barrel-roll. The impact of the water shattered his Burgess boat, the

ing the chasing pack, but after ushered off to hospital for precautionary X-rays.

It certainly was not the worst Jones has suffered in a 12-year career in Formula One that has seen him win the world title three times as well as being the only European to have won the American title, too.

His last championship, in others were off the pace, so I put 1991, was won despite a horrific clash with Cappellini which has left scars on Jones' left leg to make you wince. "I'd woo the race was stopped and Jones was first three races of the season, but leg in carbon-fibre to hold it all

in the fourth race, in Hungary, Cappellini drove into the side of my boat and I ended up with a severely crushed leg," he told me. "They did an eight-hour operation on it, put in 23 pins and said I wouldn't be able to race again that year. But I was very determined and I realised most of the

ing schedule for three months. I managed to convince a local doctor to make a cast for my

myself through a rigorous train-

side. They hauled me into the boat and I managed to get back herited the lead with just over for the last two races and do just enough to win the champi-

On the restart yesterday Cappellini showed no sign of surrendering, but his compatriots Francesco Cantando and Massimo Roggiero were moving smoothly through the field behind Gillman, now in second place. Then, on lap 38, Caprewing, and the American infive laps remaining.

The upshot was Gillman's fifth victory of the nine-race season, and with another 20 points in the bag he took the championship by a handsome 34 poiots from Leppala, who came in fourth vesterday after being fined \$5,000 (£3,100) the previous day for what Ralf Fröhling. president of the Union Inpellini suddenly ground to a ternationale Motonautique, de-

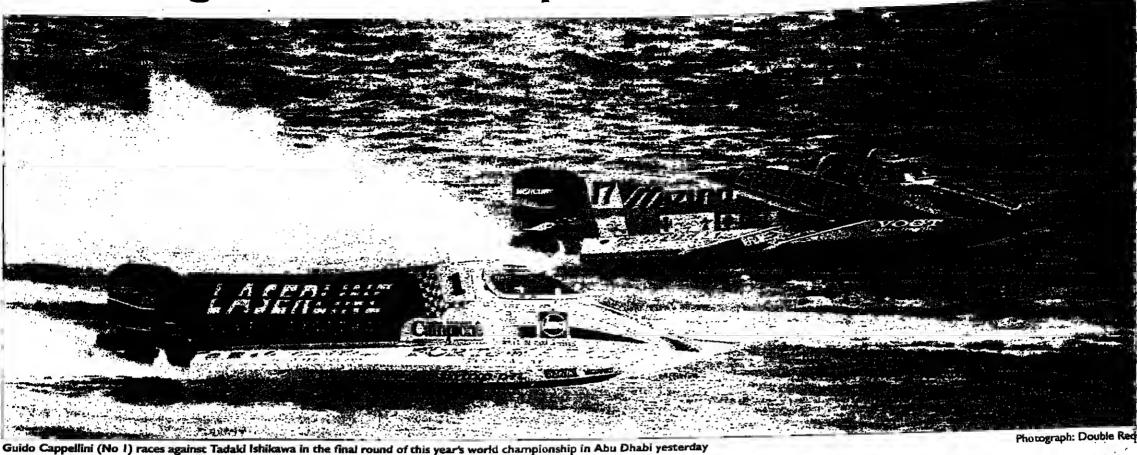
together, with hinges on either halt, possibly through over- scribed as "bad behaviour" in qualifying. Cappellini finished third overall, with Britain's Paul Blackburn a creditable sixth yesterday and Alan Marshall ninth.

Jones, happily recovered from his latest ordeal, was understandahly disappointed. "As I was approaching the turn, the wind just caught the underneath of the boat and the rest was history," the 39-year-old from Cardigan explained.

The cockpit hit the water with tremendous force but for-

tunately I was able to undo my barness and climb out. I'm very. upset because the boat's obviously a write-off and I could have won or at least finished second in the race. I was a bit hazy at first, so they gave me a brain scan, and chest X-rays, but I'm OK.

PORMULA 1 WORLD POWERBOAT; CHAMPIONISHEP Ninth and final race (Abo) Dhabb, UAE): 1 S Gemen (US, Seebold) SGmin 3285sec; 2 F Cambardo (R. DAC)





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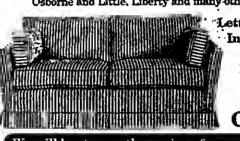
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England find energy for cruise control

reports from Vijayawada England Women 376-2 akistan Women 146-3 England win by 230 runs

On Thursday morning England got up at 3.30, and caught a 5.30 train ride seven hours long to this unprepossessing industrial town. In their hotel, the noise in some rooms of mysterious machinery was so loud that the floor shook. Cockroaches were sighted, there was a potent smell of rancid fat, and during the night several players reported people rattling and banging at their holted doors, their general reaction? It could be worse."

Yesterday morning, England set a new record womens' World Cup total of 376 for 2 against Pakistan at the Indira Gandhi Municipal Corporation Stadium. The second-wicket stand of 203 between Jan Brittin and Barbara Daniels was also a record, passing the 167 set by Anstralia'a Emerson and Kennare against India at New Zealand's Eden Park in 1982.

Britain's 138 came off 124 balls in 150 minutes, and included 17 fours; Daniels needed only 103 balls in 130 minutes for her 142 not out, with 17 fours and one six. The former's knock was a model of patience and classic stroke play; the latter's a dashing and cavplier affair applauded to the hot

kies by a crowd topping 4,000. To be fair, Pakistan must have been even more fired than England, A 500km flight from Mysore to Hyderabad on Thursday was hours late, and preceded seven hours on a bus that arrived here at two in the morning. It is plain that the outcome of this tournament will depend as much on how teams cope with meir deranged hiner

Denmark, have next to no chance of making the quarterfinals. Entirely inexperienced at this level, earlier this year they conceded 445 to New Zealand in 50 overs, and then failed to reach that target by no less than 408. Some here feel that they should not he in the competition at all, that walkovers like these are no good at all for the image of the womens' game.

it is therefore entirely to Pakistan's credit that they did not fold in the afternoon and, indeed, somewhat embarrassed England's attack by managing 146 for the loss of only three wickets before retiring after 47 overs. This will take some of the shine off England's day, after the hoped-for confidence booster went so well in the morning.

Energy levels, meanwhile, looked set for a further knock as well - England's bus left for the long haul hack to Hyderabad as soon as they could get away from the ground. Next up, Denmark on Sunday.

 Ireland humbled Denmark by nine wickets in a rain-shortened match in their women'a World Cup in Madras. Needing only 57 in the reduced 23 overs, Irish captain Miriam Grealey, batting third, was in aggressive mood and led her team to the target !

m 1711 01013	
ENGLAND	
J Brittin st Asma b Shalza	138
H Plimmer st. Asma b Kiran	
B Deciels not out	
S Metcatre not out	
Extras (b4, b6, w14, rb1)	
Total (for 2, 50 overs)	
Fall: 1-83, 2-286.	
Did not hat: J Casser, K Smith	es. M Rev
need B Michalann, C Copport	

Bowling Shareen 10-0-64-0; Malina 9-0-67-0; Sheiza 9-0-64-1; Kiran 10-0-73-1; Nezia 5-0-45-0; Mehera 7-0-53-0. PAKUSDAN reen 10-0-64-0: Mailte 9-0-67-

Maliha b Reynard Shaba c & b Reynard . Kiran b Connor ... Shareen not out



Workmen clearing snow from the piste yesterday at Val d'Isère, where for the second day in succession a women's World Cup skiing race had to be cancelled because of the weather. Almost eight inches of snow fell yesterday, forcing the cancellation of a giant slalom. On Thursday rain had wiped out a super-giant slalom race. However, organisers are hoping that today's men's downhill can go ahead Photograph: Eric Gaillard/Reuters

Cambridge enlightened by shadow competition

Cambridge got the better of Ox-rough cross-headwind, Mindful Canadian international Brad it rather than try to cut inside, fortunately, not at the same ford in the shadow competition of the Trial Eights yesterday by at least completing the course relegating to the third boat the giant among 50-year-olds, Andy a certain Blue.

will on the cricket.

This won't matter to Pakistan, who already beaten by

The part of the cricket istan, who already beaten by

The part of the cricket istan, who already beaten by

The part of the part of

part, Terry Dillon, had experienced keeping the Oxford coxes without clash or injury and by apart, Harris had the flag up within 10 strokes, hefore the crews had a chance to settle to Ripley, who as a star performer a rhythm, but he had little to do on the indoor machine was ex- as they stayed level to a minute pected by the uninitiated to be after the Black Buoy when, as

of the difficulties his counter- Crombie, which managed to draw away steadily to the Harrods Depository. There Ellis, now a length of

open water behind, tucked in hehind Juniper, coxed by Alistair Potts, and the umpire had his flag up again although there was no chance of a clash and the

This gave Ellis, the more experienced cox and the one who knows the Tideway better, a chance to take a better line and

Surrey bend. To prove the water better our only chance really." vessel was moored out in the crossed. As Harris put it after- lengths when Juniper crossed in

for a time she was two boat

widths inside her opponent's

Ellis was more blunt. "I was i records. going for the bump. They had :

- Hugh Matheson

BOXING -

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Record beckons Rhodes

slipstream of Naseem Hamed's meteoric rise to prominence. But is Rhodes going too fast too soon? That is the major question waiting to be answered in his home city of Sheffield tonight.

Just 23 days past his 23rd birthday, Rhodes tackles the more experienced Canadian southpaw Otis Grant for the vacant World Boxing Organisation middleweight title at the Ponds Forge international centre.

It is a sizeable rise in class for prospect of 16 professional ights and, if Rhodes passes the examination, he will become Britain's youngest world champion since Jack "Kid" Berg in

Technology is being providattempt by satellite link-up in his has been a help to me. He's ex-

a hurry, swept along in the he is preparing for next Friday's world title fight with Kevin Kelley.

On the same Saturday a year ago, it was queried whether Rhodes was being thrown in too early against former WBO champion Paul "Silky" Jones for the vacant British light-middle title. But the schedule was spot on. Jones was halted in the eighth and Rhodes was crowned as the youngest British champion for 57 years. And 90 days later he won a Lonsdale Belt outright in record time.

"I think I've been moved along just right," said Rhodes. "I'm prepared to fight for a world title and I think everything'a going to plan. I'm always up for it no matter who it is. Having Naz in the gym ened for soul-mate and gym-mate courages you, helps you a lot. Hamed to watch Rhodes' title Naz coming through so young

going to happen and how to handle it."

The Jamaican-horn Grant, 29, comes with a sound pedigree. He was unlucky only to draw with former champion Lonnie Bradley in March. Grant was awarded a re-match but Bradley had to give up the title because of retina trouble. His only defeat in 30 fights came against the World Boxing Council champion Quincy Taylor in 1994 and has 17 stoppages on his record.

Grant has thoroughly prepared for this fight and arrived in Britain more than a month ago to acclimatise properly. That is the measure of how seriously he is taking Rhodes.

Can Rhodes climax a quite outstanding 12 months? It will be tough hut he may gradually late stoppage he is predicting. David Field

MOTOR RACING

Doubts over Belgian Grand Prix Windless targets Towers

The organisers of the Belgian Ryan Rhodes is a young man in hotel room in New York, where plained things, told me what is Grand Prix have been given until the end of this month to find a way of working around a strict han on tohacco advertising, or see the race removed

from the calendar.

FIA. Formula One's ruling hody, has got tough with the Belgians and, in addition, a schedule released after its meeting in Monaco did not include a French Grand Prix.

A French court ruled this year that all national television channels were entitled to broadcast a race on French soil which went against the FIA's exclusive rights deal arranged with individual broadcasters.

The Belgian Grand Prix is due to take place on 30 August at Spa-Francorchamps, hui has been jeopardised by a law banning all tohacco advertising wear down Grant to force the and sponsorship from 1 January, 1999, passed by the Belgian parliament last month.

"As a result of recent anti- A tough week is unlikely to be- try to drop 50 points on them. a decision regarding the inclusion of the Belgian Grand Prix in the calendar for 1998 and thereafter has been delayed until 31 December, 1997," an

Organisers of the Portuguese Grand Prix were given until the end of the year to complete necessary work on the Estoril track.

FIA statement said.

If these works were not complete, the race on 11 October would not take place. This vear's race was taken away from Estoril and replaced with the European Grand Prix in

The European Grand PTIX III
Jerez Spain.

1998 FORMULA ONE SCHEDULE: 2
March: Australan Grand Prix (Albert
Park), 29 March: Brazilian (Interlagos), 12
April: Argentine (Buenos Alres); 26 April:
San Marino (Imola), 10 May: Spansh
(Barcelona); 24 May: Monaco (Monte Carlo) 7 June; Canadian (Montreal); 12
July: British (Silverstone); 25 July: Austran
ISpelbergi, 2 Aug: German (Hockennelm); 16 Aug: Hungarian (Budapest); 30
Aug: Belgan (Spa-Francorchamps); 13
Sept: Italian (Monza), 27 Sept: Lusemboug
(Nurburging, Ger); 11 Oct Portuguese (Esiori), 1 Nov: Japanese (Suzuka).

BASKETBALL

tobacco legislation in Belgium, come any easier for London If we win and I score two Towers at the Moorways Sports Centre tonight, when their former player Tony Windless lines ly survived a mauling from up with Derby Storm intent on having a major influence on the Budweiser League table.

The 6ft 5in American was ditched by Towers during the summer, when their coach. Kevin Cadle, preferred James Hamilton for the European Cup campaign. Since then Towers have lost eight out of nine group games, including a 85-70 defeat away to Honved Budapest on Tuesday after they had already failed to qualify.

If Windless does not bear any grudges, he is determined to add to Cadle's discomfort. "I. was never given a reason. I was shocked when Kevin preferred to go with James," he said. "He's a great player, but I don't think he's ever played harder than me.

"I'm not going out there to

points, it will be a success."

On Thursday, Towers hare-Leicester City Riders in the Naand now take just a 76-74 lead to the Granhy Halls for Thursday's return.

The Storm could produce another upset tomorrow against second-placed Birmingham Bullets, who have Tony Dorsey (eye injury) and Nigel Lloyd (hand injury) unlikely to play. Derby's Stedroy Baker faces since leaving the club.

Chester Jets have signed the American John Tresvant on with the race. a short-term contract as cover for their three injured Ameri- 1 am that tired and have not cans, Brian Lloyd, Sean Bell and shaved and rested then it shows Ricardo Leonard, Tresvant was released last week by Greater and that I should go a lot London Leopards. - Richard Taylor

SWIMMING

Hickman reclaiming authority with butterfly win

James Hickman took advantage of Stephen Parry's jet-lag to begin re-establishing his domestic dominance in the British Championships at Ponds Forge in Sheffield yesterday.

The Stockport Metros swimmer won his 100 metres hutterfly confrontation with Parry, who had to settle for third place after only arriving on an overnight flight from his base in Florida early yesterday morning.

Parry, who heat Hickman twice when they met in last summer's European trials, had won his heat within three hours of landing at Manchester Airport hut was never a threat in the final.

Hickman, who clinched his selection for next month's World Championships in Australia in the 200m hutterfly last night, led from the start to win in 53.76sec.

Bolton's Robert Greenwood was second in 55.11 with the Liverpool swimmer Parry, the European 200m hutterfly hronze medallist who trains at Florida State University, nearly two seconds adrift with a time of 55.44.

Parry, though, was already assured of his selection for the worlds - which hegin in just over a month - and had opted not to return in time for last night's 200m event as he prepares for Perth.

The second day of the championships at the Ponds Forge pool, in which the vast majority of the Australiabound team have already qualified, did hring two British

Bath University's Darren been going over the rough wa- Mew celebrated his 18th ter and swell while we had; hirthday in style by breaking been hitting it all. That was the James Parrack's five-year-old course at the beginning of the difference between the stations 50m hreaststroke record by which we lost at the toss. It was : 0.05sec with a winning time of

they turned round Craven Cot- crews had a perfect right to take they closed rapidly and the From there, her crew back. And Ashton's Helen Don-The two key ingredients of tage the rough water and a long what water they wanted. At boats looked certain for a spec- on the correct station, Angeli- Duncan sliced nearly a tenth of stroke mark established at the

1992 Olympics in Barcelona by Joanne Deakins, third in today's final, with victory in 2min 13.82sec, "I was expecting to beat the

record, but not here," said the 16-year-old A level student, who had already qualified for Perth. "I had not tapered down my training or anything."

Two Welsh records were also set by swimmers finishing fourth in their final, Phil Melhuish did so in the 50m hreaststroke with a new mark of tional Cup semi-final first leg, 29.59 while his Swansea teammate, Chris Jones, lowered his own 100m backstroke record to

"There was a mix-up on my flight because I was hoping to get back to Britain a couple of days ago," Parry said. "I think the effects of the long flight showed a hit.

"I didn't land until 8.15 this Birmingham for the first time : morning and I was swimming by 10 o'clock. I tried not to think about it and just get on

"But if I can do 55.44 when that the training is going well faster in Perth,"

- Ion Gordon

SPORTING DIGEST

ICE HOCKEY

Double-headed Panthers

Nottingham Panthers face the biggest weekend of their season when they tackle Manchester Storm and Sheffield Steelers in double-header.

D 8858 II I'I. Panthers, top of the table, Independen! take on second-placed Storm at home today, with the game against their bitter rivals The 31-year-old defence man is Sheffield tomorrow night. Mike Blaisdell's side are lev-

el on points with Manchester, but lead due to more wins, while Steelers are two points adrift in third with a game in hand. Nottingham suffered their worst league defeat of the season last Sunday when they were

on the receiving end of a Ben-

son and Hedges Cup backlash against Cardiff Devils. Cardiff ran out 6-2 winners Vin Panthers' own backyard just 24 hours after being beaten by Ayr Scottish Eagles in the final.

Blaisdell said: "It's an eightpoint weekend. With 14 games to go, we've never had such a tight race at this stage of the season, so these are two vital league matches."

Nottingham should have new signing Mike De Angelis. a veteran of both the World Champiooships and the Olympics for Italy.

Other League games today see Bracknell Bees at home to Cardiff and Basingstoke Bisoo meeting Ayr Scottish Eagles, while Newcastle Cobras go to Sheffield in the Express Cup. But in another clash of the

titans and in a re-run of the B&H Cup final, Cardiff face a Basketball home league match-up with Ayr on Suoday. Just eight days after their meeting at the Sheffield Arena.

Athletics

The International Amateur Athletic rine international Artialeur Article Federation yesterday announced its schedule for next year's Golden Leegue, removing the provisional Paris event from the ist. The Golden Leadue is a step forward from the pre-Laggies as a suphur was internal to vious Golden Four maetings of Oelo, Zurich, Brussels and Berlin and offers a jackpot of Stm to be divided among athletes who win their event at every

GOLDEN LEAGUE SCHEDULE: 14 July: Rome; 16 July: Oslo; 8 August: Monaco: 12 August: Zurich; 28 August: Brussels. 2 September: Berin; 5 September (Golden **Badminton**

Badminton

WORLD GRAND PRIX Finals (Jakarta, Malay) Men Group A: B Santoso (Indon) bt A B Kusuma (Indon) th B-3 15-1 Group B: M Mainaky Indon) bt T Suer-Laundsen (Den) 15-7 15-11 Group C: Handrawan (Indon) bt A Wiranata (Indon) 8-15 15-7 15-8; Dong Jong (Ch) bt P Rasmussen (Den) 15-4 15-8 Group D: P E-H Larsen (Den) bt H Susanto (Indon) 13-15 15-7 15-8; (Wileys (Indon) bt Chen Geng (Ch) 15-3 15-2 Women Group A: S Susanti (Indon) bt Del Yun (Ch) 11-4 12-10; Gong Zhichao (Ch) bt M Andrieuskaya (Swei If-4 If-2 Group C: Ye Zhaoying (Ch) bt Yao Yan (Ch) 11-2 11-3 Group D: C Martin (Den) bt M Audina (Indon) 12-11 4-11 11-5.

Tom Chambers, the Philadelphia 76ers iom crambers, the Prizacephia (Yest's forward who was a four-time All-Star and Most Valuable Player of the 1987 game in Seattle, has announced his retirement from the National Baskethad Association

Boxing Duke McKenzle is to challenge for his former British featherweight title on 31 January - three months before his 35th birthday. McKenzie, the former three times world champion, will meet Paul Ingle, of Scarborough, on Frank Mal-oney's promotion at Hull ice Ping, near-ly 13 years after his first British title

Football

Riccardo Scimeca, the England Un-der-21 captain, has confirmed his fitness for next Wednesday's European Championship play-off match with Greece at Carrow Road. The Aston Vil-la central defender, who suffered ta central ociences, who salment concussion after an aerial collision in the Premiership match against West Ham a formight ago, came through a reserve outing against Liverpool on Thursday with no ill-effects.

Jim Whitley, the Manchester City mid-fielder, has agreed a new three-year contract with the First Division club. Brighton are abandoning overnight stays for most away trips and will inslead travel on the match day itself. The Seagulis will leave early tomor-row for their 200-mile trip to Mansfield and in future only long journeys will be spread over two days. ron uro spread over two days.
FIFA CONFEDERATIONS CUP (Riyadh, S Arabia) Group A: Merico 1 (L. Hernandez pen Bi) Australia 3 (Violuta 45 Alois 61 Mon 90), Saud Arabia 0 Brazal 3 (Cesar Sampalo 65 Romano 74, 81)

North Korea and China yesterday be-came the first two teams to qualify for the 1999 Women's World Cup in the United States, scoring victories over Japan and Taiwan in the semi-finals of the Aslan Women's Championship.

of the Asian Women's Championship.
ABIAN WOMEN'S CHAMPIONSHIP
(Guangahou, Ch) Semi-finalis Chris 10 Talwan 0. North Korea 1 Japan 0.
THURSDAYS LATE RESULTS: Uses Cup
third round second log: Vit. Bochum 2 Ajax
2 (agg 4-6). FA Limbro Trophy third qualifrig round: Great Harwood Town 0 Witton
Abon 1 Pontins League Premier Division:
Asign Vas 4 Uverpool 1; Bleckburn Rovers
3 Manchester Uid 1. Leads Uid 3 Tramföre
Rovers 1 (at Hakto Town). Avon Insurance
Combination First Division: Norwich 1
Chessa 1.

Chesea T.

AUTO WINDSCREENS SHIELD Secondround draw: Southern Section: Fullem v
Wycombe Wanderers; Luton v Brentford;
Walsal v Brighton, Bournemouth v Leyton
Onent, Swansea v Bearborough, Northampton v Torquay, Bristol City v Milwall; Exelet
v Bristol Rovers, North Section: Blackpool
v York, Grinsby v Hull City, Mansfeld v Wesham: Wigan v Rotherham; Carliste v
Rochdale, Burnley v Notts County, Macclested v Preston; Hartlepool v Scuntforpe (Ties to be played week commencing 5
January)

71 66; C Espinosa (Mex) 70 69; S Ginson (Sng) 70 69; R Cuello (Phi) 70 69; C Williams (GB) 58 71; T Punty (US) 57 72 140; K Young-IJS Kor) 71 69; Kim Yas-Hoon (S Kor) 77 69; P Fraedlander (Swaz) 71 69; A Atwal (Ind) DAIKYO OPEN (Onns, Japan) Leading

DAIKYO GPEN (Onne, Jepan) Leeding second-round acoves (Jepan unless stated): 129 D Isrii (US) 63 66: 130 K Kuboye 66 64. 131 H Miyase 66 65: 132 K Fukabori 68 64; B Warts (US) 66 68: 133 M Kusakebe 68 65; S Higaki 68 65; H Mackay (Aus) 65 68: K Kuwabara 65 68: 134 F Kawagish 63 77: 135 T Testhra 95 68: T Inagaki 68 67: K Fukunaga 67 68; M Kumuta 86 69; H Makho 66 69 136 K Sakatani 73 63; M Kuramoto 72 64; Yeh Chang-ding (Tal) 71 65; K Maita 69 67; A Takamatsu 68 67; H Kase 66; S Maruyama 66 70; S Sugimoto 66 70.

Ice hockey NHL: Boston 2 Burilato 1; ST Louis 2 Ottawa 1; Philadelphia 4 NY Islanders 3.

Ice skating

Michelle Kwan, the former figure skat-ing World Champton, has been forced to withdraw from next week's Champ-ions Series final in Munich while she recovers from a foot injury. The Amer-ican has a minor stress fracture of the second toe on her left foot that had not completely healed. The Olympic gold medal prospect sustained the injury during the summer and aggra-vated it white winning the Skate Canada competition last month in Hal-

Rugby League The new Oldham club has signed the former Warrington winger, Chris Eckersley, as part of its build up for next season. The club has also signed a

£75,000 three-year shirt sponsorship with the Ellen Group, with incentives for winning promotion from the Second Division.

Skiing
WORLD FRIESTYLE CUP (Tignes, Fr)
Aerksis: Marr. 12 Swertley (US) 248,45pts;
2 M Fernario (US) 221,73; 3 A Capack (Cari)
215,69; 4 D Belhumeur (Can) 2400; 5 D
Downs (Can) 2309; 6 S Fources (R) 2400; 5 D
Downs (Can) 2509; 3 B Currutt (US)
205,44; 9 M Choinsole (US) 20539; 10 A
Michallov (Rus) 204,98, Women: 1 N Stone
(US) 181,24pts; 2 C Brand (Swit) 173,63; 3
C Olivier (Can) 183,6; 4 J Cooper (Aus)
152,55; 5 K Marshall (Aus) 149,36; 8 N
Orsknove (Rus) 14704; 7 5 Shuner (US)
142,85; 8 E Lau (Swit) 141,84; 9 M Rohrbach
(Swit) 141,8; 10 H Lid (Nor) 139,52

Swimmining

Swimmining
BRITISH CHAMPIONSHIPS (Sheffield)
Men: Som breatstroke: 1 II Mew (Beth
Univ) 2853sec (Brish record); 2 G Brettell
(Bath Univ) 2871; 3 R Maden (Rochdele)
2940, 100m backstroke: 1 N Wiley (Barnet) 5752; 2 S Minis (Portsmouth) 500e; 3
A C'Connor (Irl) 5848, 100m battarfly: 1 J
Holman (Blockpert) 5376; 2 R Greenwood
(Bolton) 5531; 3 S Parry (Liverpool) 5544,
100m treestlyst: 1 M Savens (Bath Univ)
2856; 2 M Fabers (Camden/Swiss Cottage)
5081; 3 N Shackell (Minield) 5095. Women:
50m breatstartike: 1 J King (Bath Univ)
3300; 2 B Brownedon (Birmengham) 3334;
3 E Robinson (Bath Univ) 3395. 100m butterfly: 1 C Foot (York) 1395. 100m butterfly: 1 C Foot (York) 110244; 3 G Lee
(Cambril): 1 K Other (Esting) 2:1872; 3 J
Deakins (Covertry) 2:178; 200m freestyle:
1 C Huddari (Leeds) 2:0167; 2 J Craig
Heavehild) 2:025; 3 V Homer (Stockport)
2:0240, 800m freestyle: 1 H Billington (St
Helene) 8:5247; 2 J Hunter (Hillington)
8:5483; 2 M Pedder (Portsmouth) 8:5984.

CHAMPIONS INDOOR SENIORS TOUR-NAMENT (Sydney) First round: J Knek (SA) bt J-Lus Clerc (Arg) 8-1 6-3; J Lloyd (GB) bt A Gornez (Ecu) 6-4 6-4

bt A Gomez (Ecu) 6-4 6-4
GROBANK TOUR (Nottingham) Ment Cuarter-finals: P Hard (Berks) bt J Tromen (Suffalk) 6-3 6-0; J Fox (Lince) bt W Herbert (Micclesed 6-3 3-6 8-1; N Weat (Hampshre) bt A Curesti (Pal) 8-1 4-6 7-6; P Roburson (Northants) bt P Citt (Wits) 6-0 6-1 Semi finals: Hand bt Fox 6-4 7-5; Weel bt Robin-son 6-3 6-3. Womer: Cuarter-finals: J Ward (Micclesex) bt J White (Northants) 6-1 8-1; J Lytrova (Rus) bt M Warnwright (Essex) 2-8 6-4 6-2; N Egorova (Rus) bt L Ogan (War-wickshre) 6-2 6-0; L Latimer (Warwickshre) bt K Hughes (Lecastorshre) 8-2 4-6 8-4 Sem)-finals: Lutrova bt Ward 7-6 6-0; bt K Hughes (Leicestershire) 6-2 4-6 6-4. Semi-finals: Lutrova bt Ward 7-6 6-0;

Semi-Hubble Littora of Watch 7-6 6-0; Egorons of Littore 8-4 6-4. LAWN TENNIS ASSOCIATION 1997 AWARDS: G Ruseckeki (player of the year), lan Barcley (coach), Hannish Collin (junor player), Jamel McMorton (disabled player). Wimbledon referre Alan Mills (critica), Notplayer, Janus McMorrem (disabled player). Wimbledon releves Alan Mille (official). Not-tingham Indoor Tennis Centre (micro cen-lre). Nottingham Open (tournament). Manchester (local authority). Central Nem-mento Miller (control). Tentral Nem-mento Miller (control). Tentral Nemcastle High (school), Boston LTC (club). Hampahire and the Isle of Wight (coun-

Weightlifting

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS (Chieng Ma WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS (Chiang Mai, Thai): Men's 91kg: 1 'V Vacarojuc (Moi) snatch 1750kg, Jenk 1750kg, rotal 2875kg; 2 S Bukn (Tim'): 725, ... 1225; 3 M Agaptor (Rus): 1 1 2050, 3800, Women's 78kg: 1 Hus to (C): 1075 1400, 2475 (world record): 2 A Co. or (Turk): 1100 (world record): 250, 250, 37, 3 M Balace (Hung): 1000, 1250, 250, 27, 3 M Balace (Hung): 1000, 1250, 2250. TODAY

5 Crystal Palace v Liverpool ... 6 Eventon v Wimbledon ... 7 Southampton v Leicester 8 West Ham v Sheff Wed ...

Nationwide League First Division

a Birmingham v Man City.... 10 Bradford City v Bury ... 11 Charlton v Port Vale 12 Huddersfield v Norwich 13 lpswich v Portsmouth...... 14 Middlesbrough v Reading...

15 Shaff Utd v Swindon 16 Stockport v Tranmere.

27 Watford v Bristol City .. 28 Wycombe v Oldham.

41 Dunfermina v Rangers

42 Hibernian v Aberdeen

44 St Johnsto v Klimarnock .

First Division 45 Avr v St Mirren 46 Dundee v Stirling .

47 Morton v Falkirk .

49 Partick v Raith

Second Division Clydebank v Inverne - East Fife v Brechin . Forfar v Livingston... Stenhamuir v Strannaer

Third Division

First round Fraserburgh v Clyde **TOMORROW** FA Carling Premiership Bolton v Derby (4.0) . Nationwide League

43 Motherwell v Dundee Litd....

48 *Hamilton v AirdrieOff

* Postponed (stadium closed for

 Arbroath v Cowdenbeath ... Berwick v Montrose.... East Stirling v Alblon Rvrs ... Queen's Park v Alloa . Ross Co v Dumbarton. Tennents Scottish Cup

29 York v Wreichern Third Division 30 Barnet v Macclesfield. 31 Cardiff v Peterborough...... 32 Chester v Darlington. 33 Hull v Colchester 34 Lincoln v Hartlepool. 36 Notta Co v Doncastar 37 Rochdale v Swansea 38 Rotherham v Torquev. 39 Scurithorpe v Scarboro ... - Shrewsbury v L Orient Bell's Scottish League Premier Division 40 Celtic v Hearts

Second Division

19 Brentford v Blackpool 20 Burnley v Wigan ... 21 Cartisle v Futham ... but Billy was ofteo too much 22 Chesterfield v Luton... for them, theo he was ofteo too 23 Gillocham v Southend much for any opposition. Cer-24 Plymouth v Milwall ... 25 Preston v Northemoton 26 Walsalf v Bournemouth

Billy made his first team debut for Leeds against Chelsea at Stamford Bridge. He was 17. It was 1960. Through his vintage years Chelsea were a special enemy

At the heart of Leeds

Billy Bremner. Today

they go to Chelsea

where he made his

debut 27 years ago.

this week.

David Robson remembers

the midfielder who died

They buried Billy Bremner on

Thursday and today Leeds play

Chelsea at Stamford Bridge. The

celestial authorities certainly

know bow to make a week of it.

For those with age and eyes to

see, there will be ghosts out there

United's glory years was

in froot of the Harding stand. the importation of half of Europe to create a team fit to compete with the memory of that Osgood, Cooke and Harris lot. Leeds never have produced a team to step into the boots of Billy's. Then they were bigger boots.

Chelsea won the replay having

been run off the pitch at Wem-

bley to no conclusive effect. I

saw, through vellow eyes, the

Cup paraded down the King's.

Road on a double-decker bus

escorted by several huodred

It took Chelsea 25 years and

hideous skinbeads

I remember watching him in one of his early games at Elland tainly he scored brilliant goals Road, be was small, slight,

ginger-haired and whey-faced. that beat them in crucial matches: but in 1970 Chelsea he ran a bit and scrapped a hit. inflicted a blow that stays for-I remember thinking he was ever in the Yorkshire memory. probably just another crap Leeds were trying to win three player from Scotland and we'd trophies that year and ended up winoing none of them. There had plenty of those. Actually we'd had plenty from everywas the League (we got close). where. We were more or less the European Cup (not so useless. Always had been, alclose) and the FA Cup (a still ways would he, it seemed. doesn't bear thinking about).

He was playing on the wing and of us getting great; that was Don Revie and Bobby Collins and a board of directors with money and ambition. But he became the spirit of Leeds. He was brilliant and dirty, cynical and indomitable. He could do everything: win the hall, beat men, give it long, keep it short, shoot, head, see opportunities,



Billy Bremner lifts aloft the FA Cup after Leeds' I-0

goals wheo all else had failed. He made opponents angry and thrived on it.

A lot of people who didn't love him hated him. Hated us. We were so damn good. At the start of the golden age that stretched from 1965 to '75 we were mean, well organised and hard to beat. By the cod of it we were mean, well organised and absolutely sensational. But perhaps there was some

bad karma at play (as they say on the terraces). The lads talked to referees more thao any other players oo earth, sometimes spent the whole game talking to them, but it didn't stop them from getting some of the worst decisions in human history. It was normal to see Billy "doiog" someone, getting peoalised and looking aggrieved. Or Norman Hunter doing something trenchant to someone's leg, then raising a hand in acknowledgement to the referee ("Yes I know ref, fair cop! I did it, you saw, be

The man who had the passion to set Leeds aflame Billy was not the beginning make opportunities and score felt it and I might do il again"). Oh yes, even we realised there was some moral amhiguity (as they say on the terraces). I remember sitting in the

upper tier at Stamford Bridge at a Chelsea-Leeds game and looking down on what nowadays they call "movement". It was awe-inspiring. Nobody ever had the ball without two or three options for laying it off - it was a game made easy. They played in tight little triangles oo the left. Hunter-Cooper-Gray, each available for the other. Up from there was Mick Jones, always brave, always strong in the air, laying it off for Allan Clarke to be lethal in the strike. Oo the right wing there was Peter Lorimer, one of the weaker hrethren in this

company, but very strong with his right foot 25 yards from goal. But above all, there was Bremner and Johnny Giles in the midfield bard little meo working brilliantly together, tackling, dribbling, weaving an intricate basketwork of passes between them as they moved

upfield. Giles had the greater vision but it was Billy who had the passion, the fire that set the

I talked to Alan Hudson yesterday, the most gifted Chelsea player of roughly that vintage (he was signing copies of his book The Working Man's Ballet; Billy's book was called You Get Nowt for Being Second).

How good was Billy? "He was brilliant. He was so good he made you play better against him - co going out on the night before a Leeds game." They were the best weren't they? Yes, by far. They had great players in every position. We re probably two players short of being a great team."

Were they a dirty team? Yes, very dirty." Would they have done even better if they hadn't been? "I don't think they could. It was part of their character. They liked frightening people." Did you bate them? Yes, we bated them and they hated us. We'd like to have played them every week.".

Mulhall revives a dream from decay at The Shay



Head groundsman Jim Green (blue top) and ground superintendent Graham Osbourne prepare the pitch at Halifax Town's ground, The Shay, this week for the onslaught of Christmas matches

Photograph: Peter lay

TODAY'S NUMBER

First Division

Wolves v Notim Forest (LO)

75,000,000

The number of dollars [£46m] that Pedro Martinez will receive over the next six vears following the contract he signed this week with Boston Red Sox - baseball's most expensive contract ever, beating Gary Sheffield's \$61m six-year deal with Florida Martins. Boston have a two-year option that would make the contract worth \$92m.

Six months ago the future, like the past, looked bleak for Halifax Town. But the cali to arms of an old servant invigorated the club who now find themselves tantalisingly close to a return to the League. Guy Hodgson reports

take a look upwards from the Shay and the brooding Beacon Hill of the Pennines stares back at you. Until recently it summed up Halifax Town's position: the club at the bottom, Football League status at the top. No. transplant Everest and you get a truer picture.

Division North io 1921 and so used to being in trouble "crisis" should have been incorporated game away from joining the Unibond League. Today they are seven points clear in the GM Vauxhall Conference and the League status the reluctantly surreodered in 1993 is sudden-

It is, as the Yorkshire Post put succinctly recently, a "miracle to rival the moment Lazarus opened his eyes and wondered why on earth he had dozed off

In Halifax they are rubbing their eyes and wondering, too. The club has flirted with oblivion for so loog the oeighbours

and even Robert Maxwell took a look at The Shay's finances and thought better of buying. "It had a teouous link with financial stability to say the least," the supporter for 43, John Stockwell agreed. "We had the inland Revenue trying to wind us up with the VAT people close be-

A new, manageable, rental agreement with the local council, who own the ground, and the directors digging into their own pockets shook off the financial jackals and with gates around 2,000 the club can now afford to spend £1m on The Shay to make it fit for elevation. Work begins on 5 January.

Last May Halifax Town, had long since stopped talking the financial lurn-around. like the supporters, credits George Mulhall with the revival on the field. Manager of the club in their heyday - and here we are talking the old Third Division 25 years ago - he arrived on "keep us up and job's yours" basis in February.

> You have to lay a lot of credit at his door," Stockwell said. "He's brought in his own people and a good attitude and professional standards. He has transformed the club. If the scason finished tomorrow I could say I've had more enjoyment this year than ever before."

Mulhall, a 61-year-old Scot. had been a manager at various clubs including Bolton and Bradford City and was coaching youngsters at Huddersfield

ment interference in national

more on his animosity towards

when he was asked to help at Halifax. His priority was a leaky defence which he plugged with a variety of ex-League players including the 35-year-old former Coventry captain, Brian

He also changed the style to a less girect one which has worked to the extent that Halifax are the only club in senior football with a 100 per cent

"I wouldn't go as far as to say they used to be a long ban team," Mulhall said, "but I'm of the opinion the longer you kick it the more chance you have of losing possession. I like to keep the ball, be more patient and pass with purpose. Let's put it this way. you won't play for me unless you can pass the hall."

When Halifax beat Huddersfield's first team pre-season. Mulhall realised he had the makings of a useful side. How useful, he is still not certain and he worries what a few injuries might do. "I'm happy where we are," he said. "I'd he foolish to say otherwise, but the bottom line is that we haven't won anything yet. I ose two or three games and the situation changes dramatically.

"The club's desperate to get back in the League like most clubs in the GM Vauxhall Conference. Could we survive if we got there? I think maybe the top six could play in the Third Division."

Stockwell, who had to live with the memories of FA Cup wins over West Bromwich Al-

bion and Manchester City to sustain him through the the dark days, woold love to think so. "I feel particularly pleased for the hard core of supporters," he said. "Last year we were down to about 700 diehards and they stuck with us through thick and thin, mainly thin. On Tuesday we had 2,100 on a wet, miserable night to watch us beat Northwich Victoria.

"The success this season hasn't really sunk in. I know I'll be chuffed to bits if we do make it, but I don't really want to think about it until we get there. We've had very few highlights and a lot of low lights at Halifax."

Like '93 when they went out of the League? "It felt like we'd falleo off the flat earth."

Pele makes an impact as he tries to drag Brazilian club football into the modern world



RUPERT METCALF

WORLD

BRAZIL

The conflict between Brazil's most famous footballer, Pele, and his compatriot João Havelange, the president of world football's governing body, Fifa, continues unahated.

A bill drawn up by Pele, who is Brazil's sports minister, to modernise the country's domestic football is safely on its way through parliament.

Pele's hill, which has angered Havelange, would oblige clubs to become privately run companies within two years. force them to start paying tax erations are often chaotic. and allow them to organise crowds are usually pitifully

national federations. Profes-

them from ties to their clubs. clubs are affiliated to Brazil's state federations and must take part in competitions organised by them and the CBF, the national confederation. They are also exempt from paying tax.

The country's domestic football is in a shambolic state. The competitions organised by the CBF and the state fed-

their own leagues indepen- small and most clubs have to statutes, which ban governdeot of the current state and sell their top players abroad,

Havelange warned carlier sional players will become free this year that Brazil could be agents at the age of 20, freeing suspended from Fifa if the bill ever hecomes law. He said Under the current system, that the bill contraveoes Fifa Pele than on legal opinion.

> UNTIL THE START OF THE **WORLD CUP FINALS**

179 DAYS

SAUDI ARABIA

federations. There has been Like Iran, Nigeria and Mexico, speculation, though, that his it seems that another country opposition to the hill is hased bound for the World Cup finals are about to ditch the coach who guided them to France,

Saudi Arahia's fortunes in the Canfederations Cup, the cight-team international tournament that started yesterday which they host, are the responsibility of Otto Pfister, the German coach who oversaw their successful World Cup qualifying campaign. However, he will then be replaced by Carlos Alberio Parreira, according to reports from Riyadh.

their record fourth World Cup victory in 1994, is due to sign a one-year contract to take Emirates to Italy in 1990.

charge of Saudi Arabia on 1 January. He is curreotly the coach of the New York-New Jersey MetroStars, and his move to the Middle East depends on an agreement between the Majnr League

Soccer club and the Saudis. "If the Saudi Football Federation can't satisfy us, we're not just going to make a goodwill gesture," the MetroStars' general manager, Charlie Stillitano, said.

Parreira is no stranger to the

Parreira, who took Brazil to Gulf. He led Kuwait to the World Cup finals in Spain in 1982 and the United Arah

It has been reported in Lagos that Nigeria's Football Associatioo has chosen its new coach from a short-list of three: the former national team coach Jo Bonfrere, Bora Milutinovic (just sacked by Mexico) and Terry Venables. The lucky man cannot be named, though until Nigeria's military government approves the choice of the football authorities.

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A case of 'bad flight stops play' at Old Cornfield



GAFFER TAPES

What a nightmare week this has been. We were due to have the champions play here in midweek and we'd arranged a special gala night. The highlight was to be when our sponsor, Dick D'Aphone of Fantasy Wears Pvc, dropped in with a bevvy of actresses from the award-winning film bleu, She Came in a Brown Envelope.

Tragically, as they began to descend from the beavens in their curiously shaped pink halloon, a gust of wind swept the Old Cornfield. The balloon stiffened, then went limp as it speared into the floodlights ejecting its load on to the turf.

There was no alternative but to abandon the match. It was a terrible shame because we were really up for it but, selfless as ever, 1 immediately rushed to the sceoe to see if I could tend to the balloon's occupants. Unfortunately the team were similarly publicspirited and, by the time I got there, only Mr D'Aphone was not receiving attention.

builders in and it's a good job we are playing away loday as job. They have finished the cluh's stock of tea and coffee. left muddy footprints all over the boardroom and fag ash in the dug-out hut all we know so far is that "it'll cost you a packet" and the youngest ooe's got a crush on Miss Moneyecu.

On more general matters I

was surprised to see West Brom trying to prevent Ray Harford leaving for QPR through the courts. I thought chairmen had given up oo that idea ever since Blackfarm Rovers tried to stop my move to Megadosh United. tt worked, but only until the next game. I made a few changes, the chairman didn't like them, and he sacked me at half-

earlier but I'd picked myself at centre-forward. Nothing wrong with that - I did score a penalty after all - hut the usual cen-

keeper was on the left wing, the groundsman at centre-half and they still haven't finished the Auntie Nellie's paper boy at sweeper. All this in a 1-1-3-5 formation wearing a kit borrowed from the local pub team - odd socks and all. We only lost 4-1, the opposition were more confused than us.

23/FOOTBA

Leaving like that meant I didn't get my loyalty bonus but it was worth it to join Megadosh. I'd a watertight contract there and, wheo they sacked me three months later (I got the team wrong again, only this time it wasn't deliberate) I got five years salary. If it wasn't for my three ex-wives (and another on the way, though as a lone parent she'll now have to get a job) I'd never have had to work again.

Obviously I'd still want to work. I wouldn't last long on He would have sacked me the guestlist at Stringvest's if I was an ex-football manager. Look at Big Mick, my predecessor at the Old Comfield, only last week I saw him turfed

Ever since, we've had the tre-forward was in goal, the out of the VIP area leaving me to look after his 19-year-old daughter. And you do need to go 10 these clubs in my game. how else would I be able to keep tabs on my players - 1 caught three of them in there gethorpe Ship Canal. It's going last Saturday, Saturday morning that is, about 2am.

Obviously I would've dropped all three but they each got a round in then forked out for the kebabs and the taxis home. Brains of day but hearts of gold. I could hardly leave them out after that. But perhaps t should have.

Delroy and Leroy played alright hut Duane was sent off for bonking over the referee as he was being booked. "Ungendemanly conduct" apparently hut I can't say I hlame him. I was pretty sick at some of the decisions myself. We've told the ref we're going to appeal - we haven't a prayer but it means he can't wash his kit for a couple of weeks as it's evidence. I wonder if he's got

Good news on the Christmas party front. Sir Hirem Firem's negotiating the loan of Britannia now HRH doesn't want it. We can moor it alongside the ground on the Sludto be a classy do: Mutton Jeff (the Mop & Bucket's resident band), karaoke, the Scrubbers from Mars (Sludgethorpe's top strip act), and Bernard Manning - lowers the tone a bit but no one else was available. Out of courtesy we've sent an invite to Liz and Phil but I doubt if they'll come, they probably seen loads of shows

That's something to look forward to - unlike today's game. Shaun Prone's out with suspected Mad Cow disease and Ivor Niggle is also in hospital, he's having tests for

like that on the boat over the

Must dash, we're doing a runner from the hotel. Barry Goffer was talking to

SIDELINES

Rare trade in Owls and Hammers

The players who have moved between West Ham and Sheffield Wednesday, who meet at Upton Park today, can be counted on the



fingers of one hand. They are a select band in more ways than one, however, three of their number having carved a niche in football history. Joe Cockroft made 217 consecutive appearances at wing-

half for West Ham and won a War League Cup medal before his home was destroyed in the Blitz. Returning to his native South Yorkshire, he joined Wednesday, who eventually sold him to Sheffield United. There he became the oldest First Division debutant at 371/2.

In contrast, John Sissons was the youngest to score in the FA Cup final when, as a 17-year-old winger, he helped West Ham beat Preston in 1964. Having failed to fulfil his promise, he was sold to Wednesday and later emigrated to South Africa. Bobby Ferguson, Britain's most expensive goalkeeper when West Ham paid Kilmarnock £65,000 in 1967, also sampled life at Hillsborough en route to Aus-

Peter Eustace was a £90,000 signing by West Ham from Wednesday in 1969 who was transferred back for £12,000 and later managed the Owls. Lee Chapman, Steve Whitton and John Harkes also had spells with hoth clubs, who have another, unsung link. Sid Binks was a forward for Wednesday in the 1920s who tended to get his goals in twos. To a tune that lives on as the Hammers' anthem, the terraces echoed to: "Binks is always scoring doubles."

Ten things that Newcastle Colombian striker **Faustino** Asprilla might be



Waking up and smelling the coffee - one of Colombia's biggest pow-

dered exports. 2 A lenient rule of law. It was announced this week that there would be a dramatic reduction in sentences for most prisoners, to alleviate overcrowding. 3 Benevolent rulers. The and harsh reality. Not un government also an- like a Toon army season. nounced that the past 8 Safe nightlife. year's \$1bn (£606m) haul 9 Ancient places of worwould be given to the poor. Lone parents and landless peasants can expect a share of cash, 2,000 houses, 500

Andean valleys. Caribbean beaches and Amazonian rainforests. 5 The fanatical support of local gamblers - although it's sometimes preferable when they're not gunning for you.

6 Fried ants. 7 The magic realism of Marquez: myth, dreams

of drug barons' assets ship. (That are not football grounds).

10 Easy access to huge amounts of a cheap, popular, energy-giving, powdery white staple. Sugar.



planes and 200 boats.

NAME OF THE GAME No 13: CORINTHIANS

English football played a key part in the development of the game in South America around the turn of the century. The Corinthians, one of England's most famous amateur clubs, made such an impact during a tour of Brazil that when a local side were formed in São Paulo in 1910 they were named after the English trailblazers. The Brazilian Corinthians club quickly became one of the country's major powers, their most famous players including Gilmar, Rivelino and Socrates.





Liverpool's visit to Selhurst

Park today may cause Steve

Coppell, Crystal Palace's man-

ager, to reflect oo the 1989-

90 season, when he first took

Liverpool eight years ago re-

flected their progress that

seasoo. In September they

were thrashed 9-0 at Anfield

in what was John Aldridge's

Only three Liverpool outfield players - David Burrows.

Hansen - failed to score.

Four months later Palace,

their defence reinforced by

erpool to a 2-0 win at Selhurst.

Palace's matches against

the club into the top flight.

On 14 December 1986, Bradford City beat an England XI side 2-I, a match memorable not only for the result, but because it was the game that marked Bradford's return to their renovated Valley Parade ground for the first time since the tragic fire which had killed

56 people 19 months previ-

In the match, Don Good- last match for Liverpool. man gave the home side the lead hefore Paul Mariner (playing alongside a retired Ronnie Whelan and Alan Kevin Keegan and Southampton's Peter Shilton among others) equalised. Mark Leonard scored a late huying Nigel Martyn and goal to ensure a winning re- Andy Thorn, restricted Livturn for Bradford, That season ended satisfactorily too. . Finally, when the teams met Bradford recovered from in April in their FA Cup poor form to finish mid- semi-final at Villa Park, table in the Second Division. Palace won 4-3 after extra one place above Barnsley time on arguably the greatest

and two above Blackburn. day in the club's history. THIS WEEK'S TRANSFERS

Contributors: Phil Shaw, Nick Harris, Paul Newman Readers' contributions welcome. Send to Sidelines, Sports Desir, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharl, London E14 5DL e-mail address: sport @ Independent.co.uk

he Shay Financial experts fear for League's lesser lights

On Thursday, the Nationwide League proposed sweeping changes to the structure of the game. Yesterday financial experts predicted that some Second and Third Division clubs may still lose their full professional status. Phil Coscy reports. AN ALL THE WAS TO CALL THE WAY

erts predict that Second and Third Division clubs could be forced to go part-time in less than five years.

the 72 Nationwide League clubs lost money last year, the League as a whole making losses of £48m, and on Thursday the Football League unveiled radical plans to shake up the competition's structure and rules m an attempt to increase interest

and revenue for clubs. But analysts believe it could aiready be too late to prevent smaller clubs from having to go

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semi-professional. "The amount of money being lost at the lower club level means it is not possible for these clubs to carry on," William Davies, of stockbrokers Albert E Sharp. said. "Ultimately, the bottom two divisions will have to go part-time and that will improve their finances substantially."

The League's proposals include re-organising the League to include a 12-club Super League outside the Premiership, six divisions of 12 clubs each and several other structures.

They also propose awarding bonus points for teams leading at half-time, points for winning margins and even penalty shootouts at the end of drawn games. But Davies believes these measures smack of "a desperate need to try and do something. But it's getting harder and harder and it's only going to get worse. in 1995,

It's a bright future if you're a Manchester United fan but for anyone else..."

Neville Southall is in talks with Huddersfield. Everton's Welsh international goalkeeper has been offered to the Yorkshire club on loan to belp them out of a crisis - Vince Bartram returns to Arsenal in a week.

Coventry manager Gordon Strachan has made an inquiry for the Feyenoord defender George Boateng as be hids to shore up his side. The 22-year-old is rated at £4m by his club.

Tony Daley believes he is on the way to a successful comeback. after a run-out for Wolves re-More than three-quarters of serves. The 30-year-old former England and Aston Villa winger appeared for the final 23 minutes in Wednesday's Pontins League win at Port Vale, his first action in more than 18 months following an operation to repair a ruptured teodon in his knee.

> Sheffield Wednesday have released the on-trial striker Primoz Gliha, of Slovenia's Olimpi-

likeston have won police backing to stage their FA Cup replay at home despite recent crowd trouble in the Dr Martens League side's first game against Scunthorpe. However, officials have agreed to reduce the capacity of their New Manor Ground home to 2,350 for the allticket replay next Wednesday. Seven people were charged after trouble at Glanford Park last Saturday, when police used CS gas for the first time in a British ground.

Tunisia, one of England's group opponents in the World Cup. are to play a friendly with Wales in the build-up to next

year's finals. The Southend midfielder Mike Marsh, 28, is to retire following persistent knee trouble. He played for Liverpool, West Ham and Coventry before joming Southend from Galatasaray



Everton's Neville Southall (right) is in talks about a loan move to Huddersfield Photograph: Owen Humphreys/PA

Maine Road hero climbs on board

A boardroom reshuffle at Manchester City yesterday saw a Maine Road hero from the past return in a position of power - promising to "rattle a few cages." Nick Harris reports.

Dennis Tueari's most memorable contribution to Manchester City's success to date was scoring the winning goal at Wembley in the 1976 League Cup final against Newcastle.

Yesterday, as he took his place on the board as the nomince of two senior shareholders, John Wardle and Dave Makin, he promised to help the club retain its former status in the

> "I know there is immense pressure oo directors, particularly at City, but try being an explayer walking around Manchester." the millionaire

promotions company manger said. "You get stopped all the time by people who want to talk about the club and its problems.

"I have always tried to support the club, I don't hide that. I have spoken from the heart. I desperately want to help them get things right." Hc added: "I will be delving

into the club to 1rv to find out the real guts of the place. I want to know the heart and how it ticks, to make suggestions and. if that means ruttling a few cages, so be it."

In vesterday's changes. Colin Barlow and John Duokerley (both part of the pact that took Francis Lee to power almost four years ago) and David Holt all stepped down as directors. hut will be made presidents and will retain their shareholdings. The financial director, David Bernstein, moves up to deputy chairman, and a new financial chief will be appointed soon.

weeks of speculation about the control of City, with Sheffield United's chairman Mike Mc-Donald admitting he had been approached to form a consorfium to buy out Lee and the chief

shareholder, Stepben Boler.

Boler returned to Manchester from his South African home a fortnight ago and it is clear that these changes in the running of the club have been instigated by him to streamline his control of Maine Road.

Meanwhile, as City prepared to travel to Birmingham today. they transfer listed the former Republic of Ireland international Eddic McGoldrick, who cost them £300,000 when he was signed from Arsenal in September 1996.

The First Division leaders Middleshrough meet Reading problem. without their England Under-18 international Anthony Ormerod, who has a groin injury. hut are looking to stretch their The changes come after one-week tenure at the top.

from an ankle injury, while the Frenchman Philippe Cuervo could start for the first time in three months after a groin West Bromwich have a chance to go top if they win at

Jansen looks to bring down Hearts

Inter to prove they can do without Ronaldo Inter will also be without in-

Internazionale, the Italian league leaders, have a chance to show that they are not overreliant on the brilliant Brazilian striker Ronaldo when they take on in-form AS Roma at the San Siro today.

The Brazilian is currently on international duty in the Confederations' Cup in Saudi Arabia and will be absent from Serie A for the first time this season. Marco Branca will probably replace Ronaldo alongside the Frenchman Youri Djorkaeff.

Other options, such as Urugusyan Alvaro Recoba, the Chilean Ivan Zamorano or Maurizio Ganz, are ruled out for a variety of reasons, Recoba is also at the Confederations' Cup, Zamorano is still recovering from injury and Ganz is involved in a possible transfer deal with local rivals Milan.

jured Dutch midfielder Aron Winter, but have a strong midfield with Argentinians Javier Zanetti and Diego Simeone along with the Brazilian Ze Elias and ex-Roma player Francesco Moriero.

Despite the absence of Ronaldo and others, Inter come into the game in buoyant mood following an impressive Uefa Cup quarter-final qualification with a 3-0 midweek win against French side Strasbourg.

Visitors Roma are also confident after one of their best league starts in the last decade.

Easy 3-0 winners against Atalanta last Sunday. Roma are currently joint third with on 22 points, five points behind the

leaders. Inter. They, too, will be without key players in Brazilian defenders Aldair and Cafu as well as mid-

fielder Luigi Di Biagio. The Brazilians are on international duty while Di Biagio is suspeoded.

Either Spanish midfielder Ivan Helguera or Damiano Tomassi replaces Di Biagio with Matteo Pivono and Filippo Dal Moro coming into defence. Roma will field their im-

pressive attacking trio of the Argentinian Abel Balbo, the Brazilian Paulo Sergio and Francesco Totti. Balbo, scorer of 104 Serie. 4 goals, is sure that his side is strong enough to compensate for the absentees.

Second-placed Juventus. who trail Inter by two points, are in high spirits after qualifying for the European Cup quarter-finals and visit struggling Piacenza. Udinese, in fourth place behind Roma on goal difference, travel to Ban.

Wior Jansen, the Celtic head coach, is determined to stop tenders.

Hearts' ride charge at Parkhead today. Hearts lead the Premier Division by two points from Rangers, with Celtic a further three points adrift knowing they cannot afford to lose at home to Jim Jefferies side. Boosted by the £2m arrival

of the Norwegian, Harald Bratthakk from Rosenborg, Jansen now teels he has enough options to satisfy his own tactical "We can close the gap on

Hearts to two points if we beat them, so I think everyone knows the importance of the game," he said. "Hearts have played very well to top the table with a stable side and it is up to us to reduce the lead they

"It will be a hard game as

I feel they are genuine title con-

The Dundee chief executive. Peter Marr, yesterday urged Premier Division sides to see sense after it emerged they will decide next week whether to dispense with relegation this season.

stand to be demoted and replaced by the top first division side - currently Dundee - but spokesman for the breakaway clubs. Lex Gold, admitted that ending promotion is under consideration.

- I don't think anybody wants a closed league." Marr said. "The breakaway clubs are saytalks, but surely common sense

will prevail." Albion Rovers, of the Third

they can play to a high level and Division, had their ground closed down yesterday by their local authority. That means that today's First Division match between Hamilton and Airdrie is off. Hamiltoo have beeo groundsharing this season at Al-

bion and now both clubs must

Dave Bassett's Nottingham

Forest, who will have to wait un-

til tomorrow at least to start

closing the gap when they tray-

el to Wolverhampton, will be

without Chris Bart-Williams

and Geoff Thomas. Ian Woan

is doubtful, but Forest will be

encouraged by the return of

Steve Stone and Andy Johnson

Swindon and may recall Jan-

Age Fjortoft against his old club.

Swindon, now five points behind

the leaders, welcome back their

leading scorer, Chris Hay, in at-

tack to partner George Ndah.

Mark Walters has recovered

Sunderland, and may start with

Lee Hughes, a scorer five times

Sheffield United entertain

from injury.

find somewhere else to play. North Lanarkshire Council At present, the bottom club say that major electrical repair and installation works have not been carried out to their satisfaction and have withdrawn the safety certificate. Albion hope to start work as soon as possible but as it may he some time before another safety certificate is issued.

The Hamilton secretary, Scott Strutbers, said: "My club ing they don't want further had no prior warning that this was to happen and we apologise to all supporters."

- Simon Buckland

'All I do is play my game and the goals are there to look at,' says West Ham's John Hartson

Upton Park reaps riches of Hartson the trouble-shooter

First his ability was disparaged, then his lifestyle. But 22 goals in 32 games has silenced the criticism of John Hartson's football and now he hopes to refute the vilification of his character. The West Ham striker has proved the bargain of the year and will be out to emphasise his worth against Sheffield Wednesday today.

John Hartson had a touch of flu eartier this week so West Ham sent him home from training and quarantined him. This meant our interview had to be conducted on the telephone, not ideal but, according to tabloid tegend probably a blessing in disguise. If you believe all you read he would have dragged me down the hoozer for an all-day bender taking in the trashing of a hotel before driving home.

"I don't know where you got that idea from," responded the alleged Wild Man of Potters Bar when I laid that scenario before him. "I live with my fiancée, Lowry, and I don't think she'd like me out every night; golf's more my relaxation. I have the odd night out with the boys but no more than the average 22year-old."

Hartson admits that: "I have heen caught up in a few things the last couple of weeks," - notably a night out which ended with police involvement and the ill-advised comment in his local newspaper column after Rio Ferdinand's drink-driving arrest that "we've all done it" - but adds: "I'm learning the hard way, the experience will stand me in good

For a 22-year-old Hartson has already acquired a lot of experience. good and bad. Swansea born and bred, he was spotted as a 10-year-old by Luton. Nine years later, half-way through his second season in the Hatters' first team, he signed for Arsenal for £2.5m, the most expensive fee paid for a teenager. Within a month George Graham, the man who bought him, had been sacked. "I Hartson. "I was just a kid."

Initially the change did not affect his progress, Stewart Houston took over. Hartson kept his place as Arsenal reached the final of the European Cup-Winners' Cup, Hartson scoring in the defeat.

Then came Bruce Rioch... and Dennis Bergkamp. He was partnered with Ian Wright. "Two great players," said Hartson. "I was out in the cold." There was no change under Arsène Wenger and, last Fehruary. Harry Redknapp, desperate for a striker to keep West Ham up, paid a reported £5m for Hartson.

The actual fee was £3.2m which

may rise to £5m but the latter figure took the public eye. Chelsea had just bought Gianfranco Zola for less and reaction was harsh, notably from the two Dannys, Baker and Kelly. Then broadcasting on BBC Radio Five Live they decried this "waste of money" in withering terms and appealed to West Ham fans travelling to Hartson's debut match at Derby to follow suit.

Hartson scored five goals in 11 games to lift West Ham clear of relegation and leads this season's charts with 17 in 21. A formight ago, in a rare show of humility, Baker and Kelly, now on Talkback Radio, admitted their error adding that every time he scored it "was like a knife through

Words to bring a glow of satisfaction to Hartson were he inclined to put the knife in hut, not surprisingly, he was not listening at the time. Nor, bolstered by the security of his goals, does he seem bothered by the memory of their criticism.

"If it came from somebody I respected," he said, "someone like Kenny Dalglish, Ian Rush or Alan Shearer, people who've done something in the game, I'd be offended. But it's come from people who know nothing about football.

BY GLENN MOORE

There is nothing I can do about it. It's not very nice but it's something you have to live with. These people are just employed by BBC or whoever to stir things up; they're doing

"The fans have been superb. I scored on my home debut when we beat Tottenham 4-3, I kissed my shirt and the fans realised I was dedicated to the club. I have gone from strength to strength since. I've been fortunate enough to score lots of goals and they'll expect that now but I'm confident I will score if I keep

"I don't feel I've proved someanything to prove - all I do is play a lot of press, good and had. Peomy game and the goals are there to

Worth seeing as well. Naturally enough for a barnstorming 14st, 6ftplus centre-forward a fair number are headers but he has also been thumping shots in from around the box at all angles.

"I'm not playing as well as I can but I'm scoring lots of goals so I can't complain. A lot of it is confidence and I'm playing in a good side which is creating lots of chances. We are getting crosses in and Eyel Berkovitch has been outstanding, that because that's not the kind of he's been laying it on a plate for guy I am."

me. If we can start winning away from home we'll be in a decent po-

Hartson's immediate ambitions are to help Wales to the European Championship finals - "no disrespect but Scotland and Ireland are not that far ahead of us in players, we just have to get it together as a team" and West Ham to Wembley. "I went to the FA Cup final with Kerry Dixon [a team-mate, rival, friend and mentor in Hartson's Luton days] and thought 'it would be great for the fans if West Ham were here, they'd go in their droves'."

West Ham's Wembley prospects they play Arsenal in the quarterfinals of the Littlewoods Cup next month - are helped by Hartson managing to avoid suspension. Last season he was sent off with Arsenal and booked almost every game for West Ham. This season he has been comparatively angelic.

"I had a chat to Harry [Redknapp] before the season and he said he wanted me in the team, not suspended in the stand, so I had a serious look at it. It is also because I've been carrying a knee injury so I've not been flying into tackles so much. Though I'm still committed I've had to curb it. I don't want to say too much though as I'll might get sent off this week and make myself look

"I got 11 bookings last year but three or four of those were very harsh. Suddenly I'm a dirty player with a bad reputation. People jump on bandwagons and point the finger

His worst offence this season has been verbal, strongly criticising the referee Mike Reed after West Ham's match at Leicester. It added fuel to his off-field reputation but his improved on-field behaviour helped him escape heavy punishment unlike, ironically, Danny Baker whose departure from the BBC followed criticism of Reed after last season's FA Cup tie between Chelsea and Leicester. This beloed create the climate for Hartson's accusation that Reed was a biased towards

"If someone asks me an honest question I give an honest answer but ple try and make a few quid out of you, they sell a little quote somewhere, there's nothing you can do about it. You can't not talk to anybody because that's not pleasing the public - they want to know about

"I don't put anything on, I'm just myself. My real mates know me. I go to Wales often and see the boys from school. They also come to watch me play. They've told me they're glad I've not forgotten where I come from and I said I'll never do

No club has a divine right to be in the élite any more

The Pompey Chimes probably rang out with extra gusto on Tuesday after heleaguered Portsmouth beat Wolves 3-2 to haul themselves off the bottom of the First Division, but I bet they had a hollow ring to

It's a sad statistic that a tie which, in its postwar heyday would have attracted around 50,000, drew just 8,042 - 2,660 short of Pompey's biggest gate this season - and even sadder that the majority left the ground buoyant just because Pompey had recorded their fifth win of the season.

It's a far cry from the good old days of 1939, when Pompey beat Wolves in the FA Cup final and went on to win backto-back championships the following decade before Wolves gained the ascendancy. But then, misty-eyed nostalgia is par for the course when you're a sleeping giant, and they don't come much more gigantic than Wolves, or more somnolent than Portsmouth,

"Sleeping giant" is one of football's more enduring cliches, if only because few ever actually wake up and most have inferiority complexes caused by perennial underachievement. It took a combination of Kenny Dalglish's acumen and Jack Walker's millions to rally Blackburn, and the "Messiah",

castle (although one wonders whether Kevin Keegan will have quite such a stirring effect on sleepy Fulham). It's also a term which is rare

beyond English football. True, Torino (the Manchester City of Italian football) and Genoa both fit the hill, languishing as they are in Serie B. But in the Netherlands and Spain, for example, the game has tradi-nonally been dominated by just a few teams and very few Davids have ever seriously challenged the Goliaths. In Scotland, where the championship has left Glasgow just 12 times in 50 years, Dundee are the closest thing to a sleeping giant, if only for the 40,000-plus crowds they drew during their

1963 European run. In English football, however, sleeping giants are as constant a feature in the game as. er, four divisions, three-upthree-down, and two halves: among them. (in addition to Wolves and Portsmouth) Birmingham, Burnley, Fulham, Huddersfield, Manchester City, Blackpool, Charlton, Preston and, arguably, West

Bromwich and Carlisle. But does a sleeping giant ever cease to be a sleeping giant? Probably not, since the potential and the fan base will always be there; it's the moncy that's so often lacking, and these days that's a pretty big



ON THE PAIN and pleasure (MOSTLY PAIN)

OF FOLLOWING

PORTSMOUTH

It's the reason, for instance. why Birmingham, Wolves, Fulham, and even Charlton and Huddersfield, are now deemed bigger clubs than Portsmouth, whose record transfer fee paid remains £650,000 (for Gerry Creancy). who failed to pay their wage bill last month, and who still

have one boot firmly rooted in the past. To be fair, that's partly due to the restrictions on the redevelopment of Fratton Park, which is the sole option currently open to the club after plans for a new stadium on the city's outskirts were torpedned by the Department of the Environment, and they

owners of the only other pos- flirtation lasted just one seasible site, a nearby vacant son, In short, it seems - and goods yard. But they've made the best of a had joh: the capacity is up around 17,000 and at least it looks like a foothall ground again with the completed stand at the Fratton End and the north terrace covered. But the Mitton End is a redevelopment non-starter since it backs on to houses, while the South Stand hasn't changed much since 1926. Of course, the Terry Ven-

ables saga has muddled the waters. The promised potential investors - and El Tel's appearances at the training ground, allegedly - have been as rare as league points, while the World Cup qualification campaign has shorn the team of its numerous Australians, and wannabe Jamaicans, Paul Hall and Fitzroy Simpson.

However, the malaise at Portsmouth is no recent phenomenon. Call it perennial underachievement, call it what you will - it's been the same old story ever since my dad took me to my first ever game in 1976, in which Pompey were looking for their first home League win (and this was in January I. They as sleeping giants know only gut it, but were relegated to the old Third Division in May, and slipped down to the Fourth two

By 1983 they were back in the Second Division, and even Pompey, but wake up Pompey.

couldn't agree a price with the hit the heights in 1987, but the this probably hurts for a club with strong naval associations - that when the waters get choppy. Pompey simply haven't got the sea tegs. Having said that, at least

they have come closer to glory than any of the aforementioned sleeping giants, namely when Jim Smith steered a side containing the likes of John Beresford and a prodigy called Darren Anderton to within a John Barnes free-kick of the 1992 FA Cup final. But the heart of that team was ripped out and sold on, and it was back to the status quo.

Never mind status quo; it now appears that Pompey's future could rest on the persuasive powers of Brian Howe of Bad Company fame, an exiled Portsmouthian who's trying to encourage an American millionaire to invest in the club. But it's still pie in the sky,

and the proposition is hardly understood an altractive one. Twenty-five years aga, the then chairman John Deacon talked about restoring the club to its rightful place among the élite. But too well, no duh has that divine right any more, and in Pompey's case it's First Division safety that's the goal. The cry must surely be not play up

A blessed relief to the City pain in Spain

As a child in Manchester, I knew a boy who owned a rather interesting football to show me the Gaudi arshirt. Its colours were neither sky blue or red, and he was a Liverpool supporter anyway. so I had no idea what this partly wine-coloured jersey wrapped round his ribs was. When he said it was from Barcelona, I thought nothing of it because, like most eightveur-old Mancunians, I had no idea where Barcelona was.

My first exposure to Barca as a playing side was after my football-supporting nemesis had waltzed into school after he had seen Manchester United trounce Barca.

One of the Barca team my 10-year-old self hadn't heard of. His name? Diego Maradona. This appeared to mean something to my rednosed colleague. As a htuenose who saw United win the cup 10 days after City's 1983 relegation, my instinct was to feel affinity to the underdogs. How little I

Years later. I opted to learn Spanish at school. After the nightmare of Latin, I wasn't going for any more of that nominative, accusative, genitive nonsense essential to German. In fourth year. I was offered an exchange visit with a lad in... Barcelnna. Once I had seen a postcard of the Nou Camp, I knew why I wanted

to stay with a stranger called David. His family was keen chitecture, the Ramblas, the site of what was to become the Montjuie Olympic Stadium, the Ciutadella Park etc, but I was waiting for the hig one: Nou Camp. We witnessed a 2-0 win over Racing Santander from the uppermost echelons, deriving as much fun from my paper darts as from the football. Come on, I was only

> FAN'S EYE VIEW NO 236 BARCELONA MARC STARR

14! One Gary Winaton Lineker was in Venables' side, and he scored both goals. Marvellous. Fast forward five years. I

was there to improve my Spanish and I was lucky enough to witness a Barca-Madrid game. That season, Barcelona won the title and the European Cup, which provided me with two of my hest ever nights out. I returned several times, seeing Barca v Espanynl at Sarria in 1994 and one of Ronaldo's performances two years later in which he scored twice.

Nevertheless, I have been asked why Barca appeals to me. After all, aren't they the Manchester United of Spain? Both sets of fans think the right to win is theirs, they become indignant when this right is challenged by anyone, yet they don't like being reminded that, despite claims of being the biggest, most successful clubs in the world, their deadliest rivals, Liverpool and Real Madrid respectively, have won at least three more European Cups than their own team, surely the most effective yardstick for greatness.

By rights, then, I should hate Barca. But it is my bit of luxury, my compensation for following my team to drubhings in places such as (and others even bleaker than) Barnsley. Like an office girl who stares longingly at pictures of Keanu Reeves, but who still wouldn't swap him for her Sunday League-playing brickie bushand, I might like to wish that Hristo Stoichkov and Giovanni could join Georgi Kinkladze and Kevin Horlock, but I still stood there in 1992 with a million wild-eyed Catalans with the distinct feeling that I'd still rather have been on the Kippax a month earlier watching City stuff Leeds, eventual champions that year, by four goals to nada. Wouldn't you?

wals in

Barnsley v Newcastle

Chelsea v Lceds

eventry v Tottenham

صكان الاعل

25/FOOTBA

Rivals in dogfight for the right to chase United

Four of the Premiership's top five meet today in a programme that will help define who are best suited to challenge Manchester United. Guy Hodgson looks at the weekend ahead, while Nick Harris (below) analyses the programme

match by match.

Sometimes a team can endure their rivals creeping up or past them while they idle away the hours at Sky's behest; today Manchester United can watch their main rivals inflict damage on each other.

While United do not play Aston Villa until Monday night, the four teams immediately behind them meet today, knocking lumps and points off each other. Second-placed Chelsea meet Leeds (fifth) while Blackburn (third) travel to Arsenal (fourth), with all four aware they cannot afford to give the champions a further advantage.

That was underlined last week. Arsenal defeated Newcastle at St James' Park last Sat-

There are good times and bad they prevailed on Tyneside to go week, "But the way Rund Gul- the two form teams and the only his shoulder still hurts him. months earlier. United, embroiled in the Champions' League, were only sixth on that be sure of playing." occasion and still went on to win the League by seven points. The fact that they are top at this stage of the season is ominous.

> Chelsea are pearest to their coat-tails, three points behind, which is a tribute to Ruud Gullit's management of a team whose key players are either approaching the footballing watershed of 30 or have long since waved it goodbye. Only he will know who is playing today. The rest of us do not have a clue.

"They bave some excellent players," said Gunnar Halle, the Leeds defender who will attempt to halt an attack which urday almost to the day when scored six at Tottenham last four wins and a draw. They are

times to have the weekend off. top of the Premiership 12 lit picks his side even my Norwegian team-mate. Tor Andre Flo, who got a hat-trick, can't

> It does not make it easy for opposing managers, either, defeats. As ever, suspensions when they may have to counter the air force of the 6ft 2in Flo or the groundswell of the 5ft 6in Gianfranco Zola. Throw in the contrasting styles of Mark Hughes and Gianluca Vialli and the opposition need centrebacks who can adapt over and again. "It's the kind of game you look forward to as a coach," George Graham said, "pitting your wits against some of the best players in the Premiership."

Chelsea have lost only once since 26 October, a spell in which Leeds have accumulated

In addition, a major fac-

tor in the increased over-

one-sided matches. For

scored six goals or more

this season, which already

on five occasions so far

example, a team has

clubs to have matched Old Trafford's greed for points.

Only Arsenal have beaten United since then, a win which was squandered by successive cloud Arsène Wenger's calculations for the visit of Blackburn and he has to decide whether to risk the fit-again Patrick Vieira, who is just a booking away from missing a Christmas programme which includes Tottenham and Leeds. At least Steve Bould has served his three-match ban.

Of course, if Tottenham play like they did in the second half against Chelsea you could put out your youth team and get a favourable result, and their new coach, Christian Gross, may be forced to use Sol Campbell at Coventry, even though

"I want to do what I can for

the club in this difficult time," the England defender said. Now if all Spurs' highly paid players could say the same they would not be three points of the bottom of the table.

Everton, like Tottenham, are a club of ifs and many buts, and another loomed on Monday evening: if only Everton's defence could deal with attacks as adroitly as their chairman. Peter Johnson's masterly manipulation of events at the club's annual meeting left his critics frustrated. Now the hard part comes: being similarly proficient on the field.

Everton, second bottom, have gained two points from their last seven matches since beating Liverpool in October,

and as their manager, Howard team are facing Newcastle Unit-Kendall, said to fans on Mon- ed, who have failed to score in day: "We know you deserve better." They can begin to put that right against Wimbledon

The are due a bounce-back as Neil Ardley, Wimbledon's midfielder conceded. "We cannot go to Goodison with the attitude they are bottom," he said, "because teams like that are fighting for their lives. They have been unlucky recently."

So have Barnsley, who could have been four points better off from their matches against Leeds and Sheffield Wednesday but finished with none. It appears that the effort required just to match teams in the Premiervantage. At least Danny Wilson's of recent seasons, Coventry.

their last two Premiership matches.

Ron Atkinson's Wednesday revival faces its stiffest test to date with an appointment with the Premiership's leading scorer, West Ham's John Hartson, while Southampton (four successive defeats) and Leicester (one win in five matches) will desire points for differing reasons at The Dell.

If anxiety is your drug, however, the best venue could be Selhurst Park, where Liverpool's dwindling credibility as title challengers badly needs a lift. Another defeat and the natives, already restless, will be positively ship leaves them flagging after hostile by next weekend, when an hour, and opponents take ad- the team meets their bête noire



Arsenal v Blackburn

Arsène Wenger will make a late decision on whether to recall Patrick Vieira, who returns to the squad after four games out injured, but is only just back in full training. Steve Bould has cleared a threematch ban and is available again but may be on the substitutes' bench after Tony Adams and Martin Keown both performed well in the Gunners' I-0 win at Newcastle last week. Gilles Grimandi is still suspended. Ian Wright is likely to start again up front alongside Den-

nis Bergkamp. Blackburn have added teenage striker James Beattie to their squad. Beattie's only senior start for Bladdburn came against Arsenal at Ewood Park 14 months ago. Beattie has scored 15 times in the reserves this season, including twice against Manchester United on Thursday. Roy Hodgson will be probably be without Damian Duff who has a thigh injury. Hodgson is still looking for a new striker with Martin Dahlin struggling with injury and Chris Sutton set to serve a one-match suspension. There is a slight doubt over full-back Jeff Kenna (ankle).



Barnsley v Newcastle Leading scorer Barnes, Asprilla 6

Barnsley's Arjan de Zeeuw and Peter Markstedt both missed Monday's 2-1 Yorkshire derby defeat at Sheffield Wednesday with groin and neck injuries respectively. While Markstedt is fit again, De Zeeuw is doubtful for a game in which South African international Eric Tinkler is back in contention. Tinkler, who returned in midweek after playing for his country in their defeat against Brazil on Sunday, will immediately fly out after today's game to link up with the South Africans for the Confederations Cup event in Saudi Arabia.

Alessandro Pistone is very doubtful for Newcastle today. The former Internazionale defender injured his back in Wednesday's Cham pions League 2-0 victory over Dynamo Kiev and his chances of playing are small John Beresford (thigh strain) is close to full fitness after recovering and he could return in place of the Italian. Kenny Dalglish also has three more of his players close to match fitness after injury, Warren Barton (thigh), Steve Howey (blistered feet) and Ian Rush (knee) should all be in contention or close to it today.



Chelsea v Leeds

Leading scorer Last season: 0-0

Tore Andre Flo's first hat-trick in English football at Tottenham last week means he will keep his place in the Chelsea side. With Mark Hughes beginning a three-match ban, Flo will partner Gianfranco Zola up front at the expense of Gianluca Vialli. Nigerian Celestine Babayaro (foot) is a doubt for Ruud Gullit, although Steve Clarke is available and Andy Myers and Danny Granville came through a reserve match unscathed in the week and are in the squad.

Jimmy Hasselbaink is likely to replace Harry Kewell in the Leeds attack as the Australian international is currently playing in the Confederations Cup in Saudi Arabia. Hasselbaink should be preferred to Derek Lilley, despite the Scot scoring two goals and setting up the third in a 3-1 reserve team win over Tranmere on Thursday. Captain David Hopkin returns after a three-game ban to the midfield, with Lee Bowyer likely to make way, while South African Lucas Radebe plays his last game for two weeks because of Confederations Cup duty followed by a two-match suspension.



Coventry v Tottenham

Leading scores

Paul Williams and Willie Boland are suspended for Coventry, while Gary Breen and David Burrows face forthcoming bans. Gary McAllister and Noel Whelan are expected to start together in midfield for the first time since Coventry won 2-1 at Tottenham in May, the result that kept them in the Premiership. McAllister (knee) missed last weekend's 3-0 defeat at Aston Villa but will play despite not being fully fit. Darren Huckerby is under treatment for an ankle injury and if he doesn't play his place will go to Simon Haworth.

Third-bottom Tottenham will be without Sol Campbell after his failure to fully recover from a shoulder injury. He returned to training this week but has not progressed sufficiently to feature. John Scales (cheek fracture and damaged rih) has volunteered to play but will not. Ramon Vega is suspended, and Christian Gross will probably recall Gary Mabbutt and switch Colin Calderwood back into defence. Andy Sinton has recovered from a foot injury and Darren Anderton is included in a squad that also features jose Dominguez.



Crystal Palace v Liverpool

Crystal Palace manager Steve Coppell will want as long as possible before choosing his team for today's game so that injured players have the maximum time to recover, Bruce Dyer, Attilio Lombardo and Andy Roberts are all struggling but Coppell is keen to have them involved. Diver and Roberts have both missed the last two games since picking up injuries against Newcastle at the end of November. Lombardo has not played since 8 November after a hamstring injury and is unlikely to start, although he may get a place on the

bench. Palace are still looking for their first home win. Liverpool will be without Karlheinz Riedle, who has been suffering from flu all week and did not travel south with Roy Evans' squad. Rob Jones played in a reserve game on Thursday but is not considered fit anough to challenge for his place. Jason McAteer will continue in the side while Phil Babb and Steve Harkness will both challenge for a place in defence. Paul ince, now over a three-match suspension, has a groin strain and a decision will be made nearer kick-off. 2

...And statistics

United and Chelsea lead the goal rush

If it is goals you want to see, look no further than the Premiership. The last six weeks have produced a remarkable run of goalscoring: the 52 Premiership games played since the end of October have produced 160 goals, at

an average of just over three per game. Overall, Premiership goalscoring this sea-son (average 1.39 goals per team per game) is up 10 per cent on last year (1.28). If the present pattern continues the season's rate will be one of the highest in the top division of English football in the last 30 years.

Behind the figures, however, are trends which might be considered less healthy. The Nationwide League is not enjoying any in-crease in goalscoring, while the Premiership figures appear to confirm the growing divide within the top flight. Seven of the Premiership's 20 clubs -

Manchester United, Chelsea, Derby, Arsenal, Blackburn, Sheffield Wednesday and Liver-pool - have scored half the goals. To narrow the scoring down even further, Manchester United (average 2.53 goals per game) and Chelsea (2.41) are streets ahead of the field; the Premiership average is 1.39 and all the other 18 clubs are averaging fewer than two goals per game,



	Goals	Games	Average
Man United	43	18	2.53
Chelsea	41	17	2.41
Derby	30	16	1.88
Arsenal	31		1.82
Blackburn	30	37	1.76
Sheff Wed	30	17	1.76
Liverpool	27	16	1.69
Leeds	26	17	1.53
Vest Ham	24	17	1.41
Leicester	22	17	1.29
Newcastie	18	15	1.20
Southampton	20	17	1.18
Aston Villa	19	17	1.12
Wimbledon	19	17	1.12
Crystal Palace	17	17	1.00
Everton		17	0.94
Barnsley	15	17	0.88
Tottenham	14	17	0.82
Bolton		17	0.76
Coventry	13	17	0.76
-			

Man United

Goals per game: The Premiership's best records over a whole season

Season Goals Average .76 Man United 1996-97 38 2.00 1993-94 82 42 1.95 Newcastie 73 38 Man United 1995-96 1.92 1996-97 73 38 1.92 Newcastle ·· 42 · 1994-95 80 1.90 Blackburn

80

1994-95

and the worst

equals the highest total figure for a whole Premiership cam-Historically, the improved scoring rates in the Premiership this season go only some way towards recovering lost ground: even at the current rate goals are in shorter supply than they were 40 years ago. At the start of the 1960s teams in the old First Division averaged 1,86 goals per game. The more defensive strategies adopted after England's 1966 World Cup victory brought the figures steadily down and between 1968 and 1980 the figure never rose above 1.33. The 1980s brought about a small revival - perhaps fired by the incentive of three points for a win - but the figures have dropped slightly in recent years. Six or more goals in a game by one team (Premiership matches) 1992-93

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	Season	Goals	Games	Average
Leeds	1996-97	28	38	0.74
Crystal Palace			42	0.81
Nottrn Forest	1996-97	31,	38	0.82
lpswich	1993-94	35	42	0.83
Ipswich	1994-95	36	42	0.86
Man City	1995-96	33	38	0.87

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP: HOW THEY STAND

1.90

							Hom	Y:				Awa	•		Form	Upcoming matches
ļ		Pf	Pts	GD	W	D	L	F	Α.	W	D	L	F	Α	(most recent on right)	
1	Man Utd	17	37 -	+30	7	- T.	0	27	. 4	4	: 3	2:	.16	- 9	WLWWW	to just restauration in the second manager (c.f.
2	Chelsea	17	34	+23	6	0	1	lb	6	5	1	4	25	12	MIMMM	26 Dec Wimbledon (H): 29 Dec Southampton (A): 10 Jan Governry (H): 18 Jan Everton (A)
- 3	Blackburn	. 17	-33	†12	6	2	77.	20	-10	3	4	1.	10	8	DWWLW	36 Dec Shell bled (A): 28 Dec Chaice (A): 10 10 Jan Derby (A): 17 Jan Asten Villa (A).
4	Arsenal	[17	30	+13	5	?	1	18	4	3	4	2	13	14	LWLLW	Monday Wimbledon (A): 26 Dec Lecester (H). 28 Dec Tottenham (A): 10 Jan Leeds (H)
3	Leeds	17	30	+7	4	2-	3.	13	<u></u> 11	5	ा	.2	B	- 8	WWWWD	26 Dec Linesprod (A): 28 Dec Aston Villa (1-1): 18 pan Arsenal (A): 17 than Yielf Add (1-1):
6	Leicester	17	27	+7	3	5	2	12	9	4		2	10	ó	DLDWD	26 Dec Arsenti (A), 28 Dec Sheff Wed (H). 10 Jan Assen Villa (A): 17 Jan Liverpool (H)
7	Derby	16	26	+6	<u>.</u> 6∶	2	0	19	- 5	-: 2 :	0	6	4)	19.	WLWLW	16 Dec Newcaste (FI) 28 Dec Barriles (A) 10 Jan Backburn (FI): 17 Jan Mirobledo (IA)
8	Liverpool	16	25	÷10	5	0	3	- 9	9	2	4	2	8	8	DWLWL	26 Dec Leeds (I-f): 28 Dec Newcastle (A), 19 Jan Wimbledon (I-f): 17 Jan Lexester (A).
79	Newcastle	15	24	1	5	2	2	12	10	2	Ţ	3:	6	9	DWWIL	26 Dear Certs (A) 28 Dear Learners (I-1) 18 Jun Steff West FA): 17 Jun Belton (I-1)
10	Wimbledon	17	22	-2	3	2	5	ıt	14	3	2	2	8	7	TMITM	Monday Arsenal (H): 26 Dec Cheisea (A). 28 Dec West Ham (H): 10 Jan Liverpool (A).
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	Aston Villa	17	21	-4	4	ı	3		12	2	2	5	8	II	LDWLW	26 Dec Tortenham (H), 28 Dec Leeds (A): 19 Jan Leuester (H), 17 Jan Bladdoum (A)
	Sheff Wed	17	21	-8	.5	.4 -	3	17	В	1	- 2	5	13	25	LWWWW	26 One Sheltum (Hr. 28 Dec Leicester (A):
	C Paiace	17	20	-5	0	3	4	5	Н.	5	2	3	J2	Л	DWILLD	26 Dec Southampton (H); 28 Dec Blackburn A); 10 Jan Everton (H); 17 Jan Barnsley (A).
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20	Barnsley	!	1						'					. '		

Gianfrance Zola's goals have

beined Cheisea into second

position in the Premiership

goalscoring chart

Everton v Wimbledon

Everton will be without suspended Slaven Bilic and Duncan Ferguson today. Manager Howard Kendali has named teenage striker Danny Cadamarteri in the starting line-up to play alongside Nick Barmby, while Carl Tiler will continue in defence. Kendall has also brought in the teenagers Phil Jevons and Francis Jeffers (still only 16) and both will be on the bench. Everton's three wins this season have all come at home, but even if they are successful in securing a fourth today, it may not be enough to lift them out of the relegation zone. Wimbledon will be without Ceri Hughes and Chris Perry. Hughes is ruled out again through suspension, as is defender Perry. Manager Joe Kinnear has been without injured Scottish defender Brian

McAllister recently so, with only Dean Blackwell as a recognised central defender, he may switch Kenny Cunningham from right-back to the middle of the defence and draft in Alan Kimble, who replaced Carl Cort against Southampton last week. Efan Ekoku (ankle) has an outside chance of recovery after being injured for nearly a month.



Southampton v Leicester

Leading scorer

Matt Le Tissier will not find out until today whether he will start for the Saints, who are anxious to end a run of three successive Premiership defeats. Le Tissier was substituted during the 1-0 loss

fit-again Norwegian international Egil Ostenstad, who has not started a game since October following surgery on his ankle but replaced Le Tissier at Selhurst Park. If the out-of-form Le Tissier is dropped, Ostenstad could be part of a three-man front line alongside Kevin Davies and David Hirst, Robbie Slater is on international duty while left back Lee Todd is ruled out with a groin problem. Emile Heskey returns from a three-match suspension to bolster Leices-

to Wimbledon last weekend and his place is under threat from the

ter's attack. Steve Guppy and Steve Walsh join an 18-man squad after missing last week's 1-1 draw against Crystal Palace through illness. Manager Martin O'Neill will recall all three with Steve Claridge, Rob Ullathorne and Stuart Campbell expected to be relegated to the bench. Leicester are likely to drop from the top six unless they win.



West Ham v Sheff Wed

Leading scorer

Di Canio 9

West Ham striker Paul Kitson (groin) should start his first game for nearly three months. If he does start, it will be partnering John Hartson up front. Right wing-back Andy Impey is challenging for Tim Breacker's place, but John Moncur has had a flu problem all week and is unlikely to feature. Goalkeeper Ludek Miklosko has a recurring neck injury and it is likely that Craig Forrest, who has had a similar problem, will return to the side, especially in light of Miklosko's two er-

rors handing Derby both goals in last week's 2-0 defeat. Ron Atkinson is likely to name an unchanged Sheffield Wednesday line-up for today's trip to London following Monday's 2-1 Yorkshire derby victory at home to Barnsley. The only switch could be the return of Jon Newsome to the starting XI if he has recovered from a groin strain which kept him out of that win. New signing Niclas Alexandersson, a £750,000 buy from IFK Gothenburg, is likely to be on the bench, while captain Peter Atherton remains unavailable through suspension.



Tomorrow **Bolton v Derby**



Bolton, looking for their third consecutive home win, have doubts over goalkeeper Keith Branagan (groin) and Gerry Taggart (groin) for tomorrow's game at the Reebok Stadium. If Branagan fails to recover from the injury he sustained in the 3-1 defeat at Blackburn last week. Colin Todd has a replacement in Gavin Ward, the former Bradford goalkeeper who has not played in a League match for 10 months. Taggart pulled up after 25 minutes of a midweek. reserve game and manager Todd will keep faith with the central defensive partnership of Mark Fish and Andy Todd to combat the threat of Paulo Wanchope and Dean Sturridge

Derby will be looking to emulate the home form, that has seen them unbeaten at Pride Park in the Premiership this season, on their travels. The influential Italian playmaker Stefano Eranio has recovered from a head injury sustained in the 2-0 win over West Ham last week and is expected to start. The Croatian Igor Stimac, who returned from injury against the Hammers, is expected to continue his recovery by leading his side out as captain again.

FAIR PLAY LEAGUE

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12 Liverpool......16 1 26 31 194 13 Newcastle15 1 21 26 173 14 Man Utd17 0 27 27 159 19 Wimbledon .. 18 0 25 25 139 20 A VIIIa......17 1 18 23 135

UNFAIR PLAY LEAGUE

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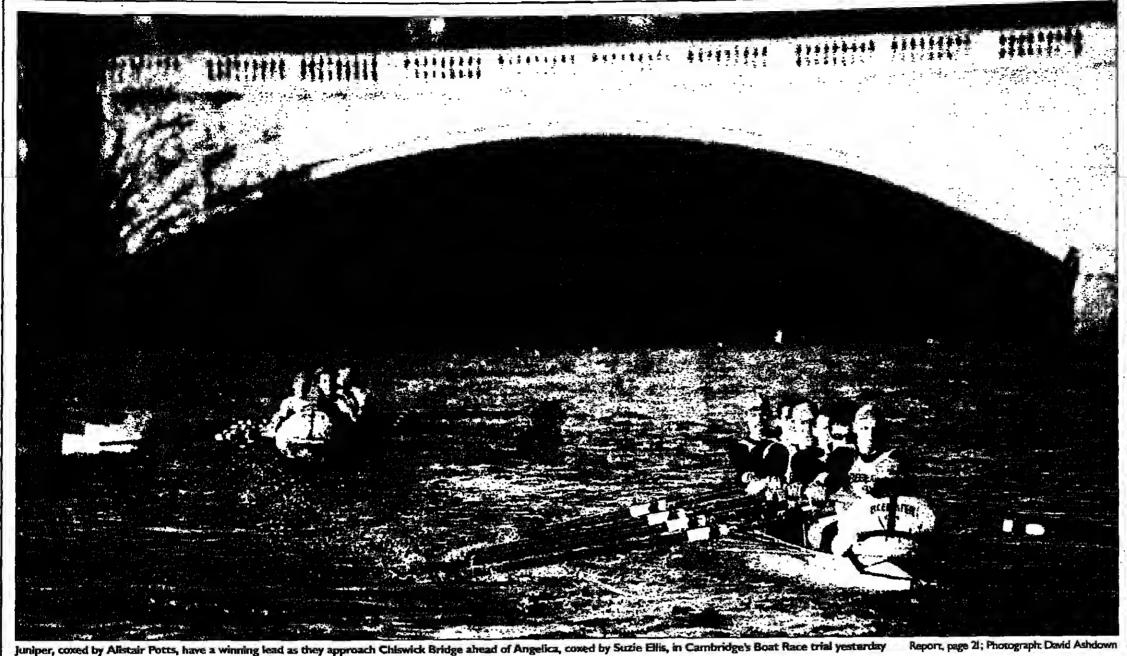
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Saturday 13 December 1997



CRICKET: CHAMPIONS' TROPHY

England next as Lara gets back on the runway

The West Indies may be in turmoil, but they proved too good for Pakistan yesterday. Derek Pringle, in Sharjah, saw them regain so self-respect after a humiliating Test-series

No. 3481. Saturday 13 December

can do so with either a whimper or a bang. Last week, when 15 years of West Indies domiwhitewash for by years, the retort was heard all around the cricketing world.

Australia may have been the first team to show the West taking kindly to it with. Indies they were mortal, but Pakistan have been the first to

South Africa, have been able to returned. nation was unequivocally ended rival Pakistan on their own hardiation is not a word that bas been in the Caribbean vocabulary since Australia thrasbed them in 1974-75, and they are not

Confronted with a fragile batting line-up and an ageing

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

wake up wearing paupers' rags. squabbles, buried during the us and I'm looking forward to ified hy team manager Clive It may not last, for few, save heady years of domination, have it. It will be a great test of char-

Courtney Walsh, the curin Karachi, with their first series baked soil. Nevertheless, hu- rent but by no means established would probably consider the West Indies second favourites to England when their Caribbean tour begins next month.

"I know a lot of people have written us off already." be said.

acter to prove to people that one bad tour is not the end of us." A consummate professional,

ll as a devent man Walsh's tether has recently been tested more by his own than by any opponent. Denying that there is a split between him and Brian Lara, Walsh pledged himself, if selected, to play against England rrespective of who was captain. Ironically, his chances of retaining the job will probably rest on the outcome of today's

However, if Adam Hollioake's one-day specialists were perhaps expecting to put another nail in the coffin of West Indies cricket, yesterday's match against Pakistan in the Champions' Trophy, revealed that the corpse, far from being laid out.

one-day match against England.

is sitting bolt upright. Aided and abetted by a lamentable fielding performance from Wasim Akram's team, the

When great dynastics fall, they show them what it is like to bowling attack, old inter-island "But the series will be good for West Indies batting, recently vil- ball as it got soft - a source of Lloyd, looked a different outfit. It helps when Lara returns to something near his best, but there were still signs that West

> particularly their pace bowling, is ill-suited to the shorter game. Mind you, there is not much a cove can do when Shahid Afridi, Pakislan's teenage pincb-hitter, keeps clearing the ropes and opening bowler Franklyn Rose will have found last night's learning process particularly painful.

> Lara has been having a lean time of it with the bat and when be first came in yesterday, he clucked and scratched about like a newly-hatched chick. What was plain is that he needed to stick at the crease.

As the overs went by the precision and the audacious power returned in spectacular fashion, Like Sachin Tendulkar in England's first match, Lara had little trouble in middling the

great problems to many - and his 88 took just 80 balls, including three sixes.

Only Saglain Mushtag troubled him and his unique off-spin is as alchemic as Mushtao Ahmed's wrist-spin. Unless they plan to get him out early, England will bave to ensure their batting does not fall away, as it did against India.

Playing half a dozen allrounders is fruitless if they are going to play like tail-enders and Hollioake may be better off playing another specialist bowler. It may be something he is forced to do if Mark Ealham's shoulder, burt while fielding against India,

has not cleared up. Another conundrum that Wednesday's win over India threw up is where best to bat Graham Thorpe. Being a batsman who is brilliant at working the ball into gaps, Thorpe needs to go in earlier rather than later. He should have gone in at No 4 instead of Graeme Hick, who struggled to return the

strike to Alec Stewart. With England deliberately picking a young mobile side it was perhaps ironic that Wednesday's top performers. Stewart and Matthew Fleming, were

the senior citizens of the side. At 34 and 33 respectively, both could be feeling the strain by the time the World Cup comes around in 18 months time. At the moment though, both are showing the younger players just exactly what it takes to compete at this level, something that Walsb's endeavours apart, has not been happening for the West Indies.

Winning women, page 21

FOOTBALL

Suspended bans for Grobbelaar and Segers

Bruce Grobbelaar believes he and Hans Segers have not been "let off" by a Football Association disciplinary committee which gave them suspended bans and fines yesterday for breaking rules on betting.

The two goalkeepers, cleared of match-fixing charges earlier this year, received thousands of pounds for beloing a Far East betting syndicate to predict the outcome of matches in which they were not involved.

But the FA said their punishment of a six-month bang and a £10,000 fine would be suspended for two years, given the severe financial hardship and three-year blight on their careers" they had already

Grobbelaar and Segers, who plan to continue their careers, admitted breaching FA rules on the involvement of players in betting, but claimed they had not fully appreciated the regulations at the time: ...: The two, along with former

Wimbledon striker John Fashanu and a Malaysian businessman, were found not guilty earlier this year of criminal. charges of match fixing by a juryat Winchester Crowd Court.

But in their evidence during. the lengthy trial, Grobbelsar and Segers admitted giving advice to a Far East betting syndicate on the likely outcome of

During yesterday's disciplinary committee hearing the FA heard that Grobbelaar had received just over £8,000 for his services, while Segers had picked up between £45,000 and

£48,000. "Tve not been effectively let off - it's a serious matter. Grobbelaar said, "Had I known the penalties before, I would never have entered into the reement with certain people

As it bappened, I was naïve.' He added that be would be continuing his planned libel action against the tabloid newspaper which first carried the match-fixing allegations against

Segers did not attend the FA's headquarters at Lancaster Gate in London, but his solicitor, Mel Goldberg, said: "He accepts the decision. He is hoping to play for Wolves on Sunday. If be keeps his nose clean, which he will, then be can carry

on playing." Grobbelaar and Segers were ordered to pay £4,000 each towards the cost of the bearing. - Mark Bradley he ottery game for

THIRTEEN **PAGES OF** SPORT BEGIN TODAY ON PAGE 14

Hammering home the goals: John Hartson, West Ham's leading scorer, talks to Glenn Moore Page 24

In search of the perfect wave: Andy Martin reports from the surfers' paradise of Hawaii Page i4

required for service



ACROSS

- Ladle's out, in vessel, Diverted, one day.
- around Mull? (6) Rift with fellow canon Vehicle for theatrical
- director (10) 12 Pianist's musical wben beard with part of key
- 14 Spoon one found in cold mug (8) 15 Plant with yellow char-
- acter died (6) Attentive, but missing American scene of
- shooting (6) 20 Rotund property? (5-3) 22 File to trim round plug
- 23 A factor likely to disrupt a case (10) 24 Charge for measure of
- drink (4) 25 Decline grant again?
- 26 Rashly insures about 500 and odd articles (8)

DOWN

- Goofy bobo injected with friend's hype (8) Stroke negotiating shallow bend round lake (4)
- Was he always on the make? (6)
- Fruit for girl building up a quantity of wine
- Shot (but not cricket) Mostly brass one the
- European drawer (6) Fish, flat one consumed (6)
- t3 Artful type's making best pot (4-6)
- 16 Find rare forms sensitive to radiation (8) 18 Twists, taking chances accepting one draw (8)
- 19 Pales from Sunday drinks (6) 21 Unaccustomed, being
- new (6) 22 Reduction in pop band
- 24 Imperial, but not English, poet? (4)

The first five entrect solutions to this week's puzzle opened next Thursday receive hardbacked copies of the Oxford Dictiouary of Quotations. Answers and winners' names will be published next Saturday. Send solutions to Saturday Crossword, P. O. Box 4018, The Independent, I Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 581. Plente use the box aumber and postcode and give your own postcode. Last week's winners: J Butterfield. Poole; P. Box at the State of the Sta

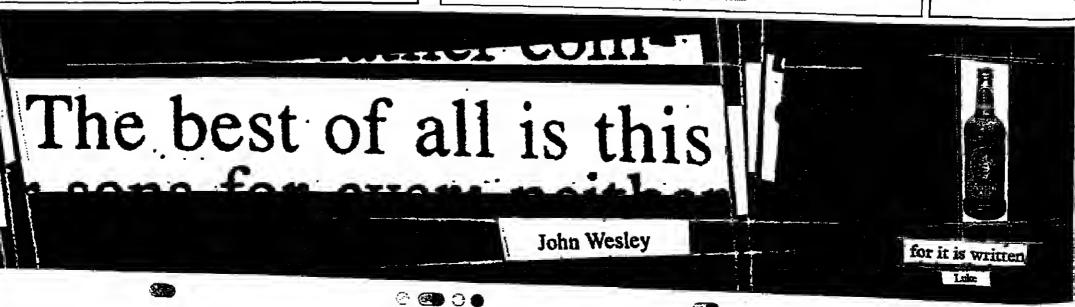
SHARIAH SCOREBOARD



Total (for 7, 50 overs) _____275 Fell: 1-81, 2-180, 3-217, 4-243, 5-266, Did not bet: M V Difon, "C A Vraast Bowling: Wastn Akram 10-0-62-3; Vraqar Younis 10-0-53-0; Saqiain Mushtaq 10-0-35-3; Azhar Mah-mood 10-0-61-0; Shahid Afridi 10-0-57-1

Umphres: C J Mitchley (SA) and B C Cooray (S Lanka). West Indies win by 43 runs

OPublished by Newspaper Publishing PLC: I Canada Square, Canary Wharf, Landon E14 5DL, and printed at Mirror Colour Print, St Back somes available from Historic Newspapers, 01988 840370. Squarday LA December 1997



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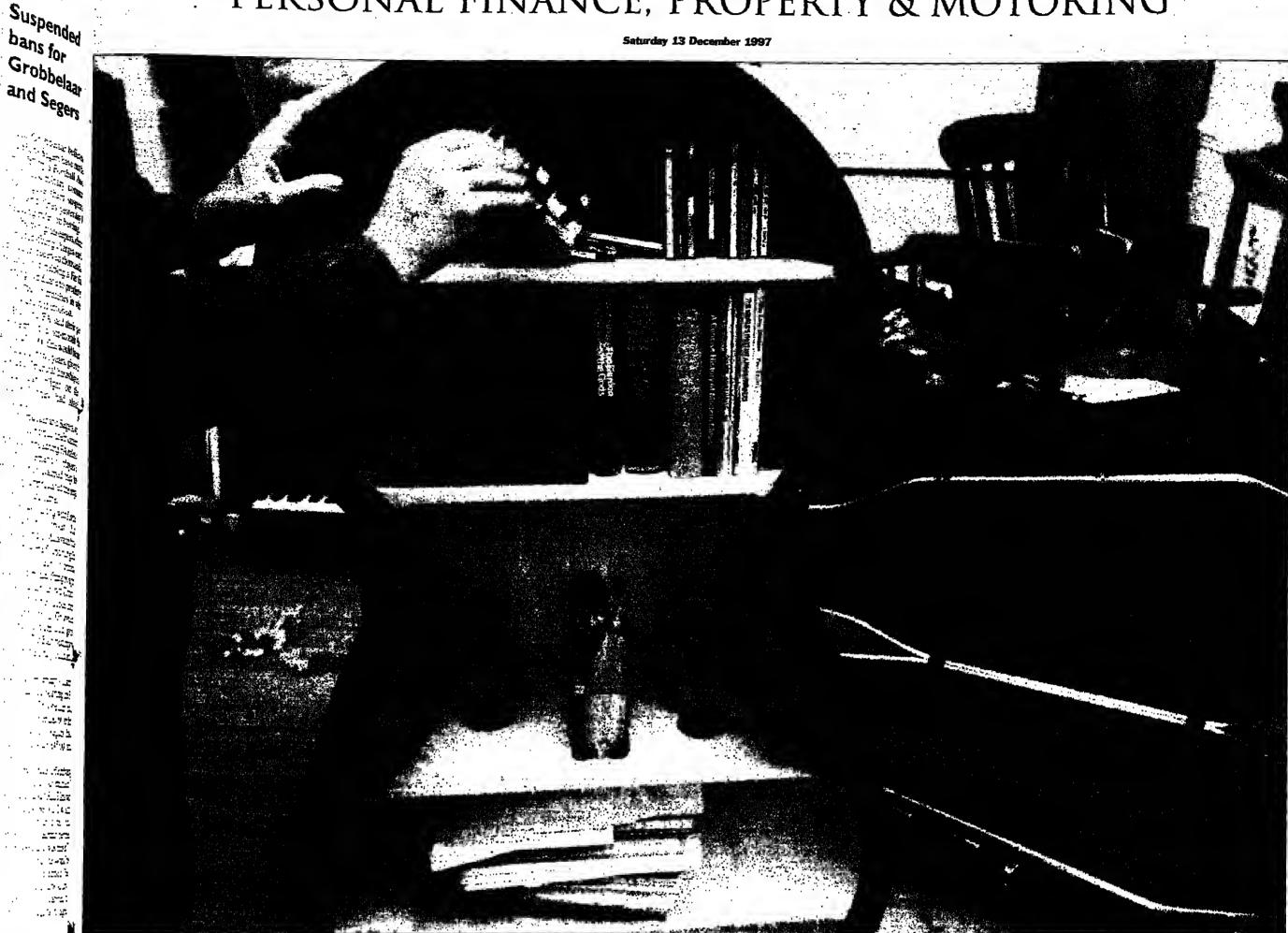
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PERSONAL FINANCE NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

()NE

PERSONAL FINANCE, PROPERTY & MOTORING



Shelf life: new house, no shelves, big expense. Having somewhere to stack your books and line up your knick-knacks is one of those details you could overlook when moving, but there are solutions, as Rosalind Russell shows on page 10: You could try something a little exotic like these shelves built into a mock double bass. This is one of a selection of musically themed shelves which are made of fibreboard by Instrumental Furniture in London Photograph; Andrew Buurman

* The six number draw offers higher pay-

outs, but ignores the bonus ball, †This

means your Canadian includes 10 two-

a 57 to 1 chance of coming up.

four-folds and one five-fold.

UK National Lottery

Operator: Camelot.

50.6 per cent

Correct

One

nos selected

number combinations, each of which has

Fascinating Fact: A Canadian (also

known as a Super Yankee) is a combi-

nation of 26 bets, all based on the same

five numbers. If all five numbers come

up, you have 10 doubles, 10 trebles, five

Method: The game is played live on BBC

television twice a week, on Wednesdays

and Saturdays, with tickets available

from outlets all over the UK. Players

pick six numbers from a field of 49. Six

winning numbers and a bonus ball are

Percentage of take paid out in prizes:

Percentage of take paid to charity: 28

Estimated payouts on £1 stake, based on

average National Lottery payouts so far.

Payout Odds

against

N/A

per cent goes to the good causes.

Looking for a punt with a pint

Pronto, a new lottery game for pubs, is already under threat of a Government ban - but how do your chances of winning compare with its more established rivals? Paul Slade plays the numbers game.

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Page 14

والمحالية والمتاج 3-3-3:35 36 Mag.

PINT '4

bans for

If you want to buy into the full dream, then the National Lottery remains the only game in town.

Only Dale Winton, Carol Smiley and their toothsome ilk can provide the multi-million pound sums you would need to quit your job, buy a Ferrari and catch the next first-class flight to Barbados. Your own chance of winning the jackpot - or even sharing one - may be astonishingly small, but that doesn't stop people dreaming.

The biggest prize on offer from Pronto for a £1 stake is £25,000, which comes your way if all the 10 computerselected numbers on every Pronto ticket are among the 20 numbers drawn. On average, this will happen once for every £2m you hand across the bar.

Lucky Choice, an offshoot of the Irish Longry which you play in UK bookmakers, offers payouts of up to £69,491 for a £1 stake, although this depends on a complex combination of bets coming right. The maximum Lucky Choice payout on any stake is £100,000.

All the games work on a slightly different basis, and both Pronio and Lucky Choice can be played in a number of different ways. This makes direct comparisons difficult. The one thing you can be sure of is that you will almost cer-

tainly lose more money than you win. The fact that Pronto will be carrying out hundreds of draws every day, plus the fact that it is played where people are drinking, has prompted Home Office Minister George Howarth to suggest legislation banning the game could

Method: The game is played in 2,000 pubs round the UK, where electronic terminals take your tickets and TV screens show the results of a new draw every five or 10 minutes. You can select two, three. four or five numbers from a field of 80. Twenty winning numbers are drawn. As with the National Lottery, the precise amount you win will depend on the total amount staked in that particular draw.

Percentage of take paid out in prizes: 55.4 per cent

20 per cent Estimated payouts on £1 stake (assuming players select five-number game) Payout Odds Correct Against nos selected N/A One Nil N/A £1 12 to 1 Three £15 83 to 1 Four

Computer-selected bonus numbers

Lord Mancroft is also chairman of the Addiction Recovery Foundation (Who's

be in place as early as next summer.

Operator: Inter Lotto Percentage of take donated to charity:

Source: Inter Louo.

1,550 to 1 £300 Five £25,000 1.89m to 1

appear on every tickei.

Fascinating Fact: Inter Lotto chairman Who 1997).

Lucky Choice

Method: A fixed-odds game, based on the Irish Lottery, which can be played in UK bookmakers. You can select up to six numbers from a field of 42. Six numbers, plus a bonus ball are drawn, twice a week, on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Results are shown in betting shops and on Channel 4 Teletext (p60f). The bookmakers do not buy Irish Lottery tickets on your behalf, but use the numbers drawn to determine who wins. Operator: Major UK bookmakers.

Percentage of take paid out in prizes: The total percentage returned as prizes depends on how many players have placed winning bets in that particular draw, and will be different with every draw made.

Percentage of take dunated to charity: Payouts on £1 stake, assuming players

select numbers in a Canadian as part of the six number draw*. Correct Payout Odds Against of bets included selected One πil n/a

10 doubles t 57 to 1 £42 Two 10 trebles £548 574 to 1 Three 78,765 5 four-folds £6,036 Four to I I five-fold £69,491 141,778 ю 1

N/A Two 56 to 1 £10 Three 1,032 to 1 Four 55,491 to 1 Five £104,388 2.3m to one Five + bonus £1.85m 13.9m to 1 Six Source: Camelot

Fascinating Fact: Once the £10 prizes are settled. 52 per cent of the remaining prize fund is devoted to jackpot winners. Source: Ladbrokes

Thought for the day



Please send me my information pack, the names of three local IFAs and a voucher for a free consultation without obligation. I understand that no-one will call me as a result of filling in this coupon. The address is IFAP Limaed, 17-19 Emery Road, Brislington, Bristol BS4 5PE.

You'd be better off with an IFA This advertisement appears on behalp of Britain's independent Financial advisers and has been approved by a person-regulated by the Pla. Your home is at risk if fou do not erry up repayments on a mortgody or other loan secords upon it four if a will provide a written quotation of request the fax regime relating to pensions has changed, therefore the Tla Benefits of this product will reduce you should be analy that the governmentplan to replace yets in 1000 this mat appear their current has privileges the PIA does not regulate all these products and services.

INSIDE

2/CLIFFORD GERMAN Healthy premiums 3/JOHN WINDSOR Between the covers

7/JOHN CHAPMAN Retirement stakes 9/GINETTAVEDRICKAS In praise of the rat race

Grade I eyesores TO GO ON SPACETER

TESTONA PRANDHORST

Revs up against Brussels

3

MONEY MAKEOVER



A new job means a new house, and mortgage, for Michael Faulkner and his family, but they don't want to sell their current cottage

Photograph: Will Walker

In search of advice on the move

Elizabeth Hall

Ages; 49 and 39 Occupation: Michael is a Methodist minister. Elizabeth is a social services

Background: Michael and Elizabeth are married. They have two sons, aged 13 and 11. They live in tied church accommodation. and have recently purchased a cottage in the parish, valued at £33,500 and linked to a

fixed-rate mortgage of £29,000. Michael has just accepted a job as area co-ordinator with Christian Aid, starting next February with a salary of £19,000. Elizabeth is employed with a local authority on a permanent but part-time contract with a salary of £14,000, but she is currently acting after his stint with Christian Aid. They need us full-time social services manager with a corresponding salary of £21,000. It is hoped this post will become permanent.

When Michael starts his new job both partners will be based in Durham City and how they should best plan for their sons. the children will move to a school near where who they hope will go on to university. they plan to live. After viewing property in the area they have made an offer on a house. Hennessey & Partners, independent fivalued at £65,000, on which they would need annual advisors, at 73, Duke Street, Daranother mortgage of £57,000.

They have about £20,000 in savings in bank and building society accounts including

Name: Rev Michael Faulkner and Ms a Tessa. They also have two endowment policies with a current value of about £17,300, and life assurance policies which together cost them about £44 a month. Michael has about £12,000 worth of life assurance and Elizabeth £78,000 worth.

> Michael pays 6 per cent of his salary into his occupational pension scheme and a further £200 a quarter in additional voluntary contributions (AVCs). Elizabeth also pays o per cent of her salary into her occupational

The problem: Michael and Elizabeth would like, if possible, to keep the cottage, while accepting that it is too small to be used as a permanent family home. Michael also intends to return to the Methodist ministry to know whether it would be possible or prudent to take on a second mortgage in order to keep the cottage; how their pensions plans would be affected by the change; and The adviser: John Dresser is a partner with

lington (01325 488556). Hennesseys are a member company of the DBS Financial Management network.

The advice: The mortgage on the new bome in Durham gives Michael and Elizabeth the option to take out a mortgage protection policy to maintain payments if they are uoable to work in future. We strongly advise

them to take out a policy. The cottage needs some improvements, which will cost an estimated £4,000. They also need to find £8.000 deposit on the property in Durham. This will run down the capital they bave in their bank and building society accounts. Added to the cost nf the second mortgage we believe this will put a strain on the family accounts and we think they should seriously consider sell-

ing the cottage.

Both Michael and Elizabeth are contributing to their occupational pension schemes. Christian Aid will provide a the contributions in his current pension fund to them, but we have established from the trustees of the Methodist Ministers' not be allowed simply to transfer his dividual savings account (ISA) in April 1999. pension on a like-for-like basis wheo be

starts his new post. Elizabeth has about five years' worth of benefits in the County Council Pension, income protection policy and additional life having taken time out to raise the children,

although she has worked for them intermittently since 1980.

We recommend that Michael takes up the valuation offer and seeks advice on its findings. We also recommend be continues paying into AVCs or possible FSAVCs, which may be more appropriate given his intentions to return to the Ministry in the future. We also think Elizabeth should consider starting AVCs and maximise ber contributions in line with the family budget.

It is difficult at this precise moment, when they are changing house and changing jobs, to make a precise assessment of what surplus of income over expenditure they will

At the appropriate time we recommend a regular monthly amount should be invested in a good quality, low-risk personal valuation if he wants to consider moving equity plan (PEP), to build up capital to . provide for their sons to go to university. The Government's consultation paper last week makes it clear that they will be able scheme and Christian Aid that he would to transfer their tax-free savings into an in-

> Once their new financial circumstances become elearer we think that they should consider other financial issues such as assurance for Michael.

Health plans that won't damage your wealth

Medical insurance is the latest product of the financial service industry to make a claim on our pockets, writes Clifford German.

Once it was mortgages, then it was mortgages and pensions, then mortgages, pensions, private education for the kids, accident, sickness and unemployment insurance in case we get sick and cannot work, savings plans to keep us in comfort when we get old but fit and active, long-term care plans to take care of us if we get old and sick and unable to look after ourselves. They are all now clamouring for any cash we have left over after paying just to live. Disposable income is becoming a very arbitrary concept. Only a very brave or foolbardy person would spend it all.

But the calls on our pocket bave not finished. As the concept of free universal health care bangs in the balance private health insurance is pushing its way up the queue to put its hand into our pocket. Private bealth care might not provide a better standard of care, but it will almost certainly provide faster care and also cover more of the kinds of care which the NHS increasingly dismisses as essentially cosmetic.

But it will cost anything from £250 to £300 a year per person, and older people could be expected to pay significantly more after the age of 50 and again at 60, so a cost-effective cover is very important. This is also a business where economies of scale are very important, and group schemes can obtain very substantial discounts as well as offering cover for a wide range of individuals, male and female, old and young, at rates that they can all hope to afford.

number of major companies such as costs for policyholders who are unat one time might have made group plans available only to directors and senior managers, now offer group schemes for all their employees, often at subsidised rates. BAA, for example, offers bealthcare insurance to its 8,500 employees and pays 50 per cent of the cost.

In an ideal world, of course, all employers would see the advantages of subsidising employee membership as a relatively cheap way of offering their workforce peace of mind and rewards drop in absenteeism which CBI, costs UK employers an average of £533 a year for every employee.

The market leaders in private medical insurance are, of course, Bupa and other outstanding debts as well as giv-PPP, both of whom bave been in the business for a long time, and both of make the best use of the time left.

whom offer a relatively expensive but comprehensive service. But cheaper options do exist. Manor House Healthcare, which is registered as a friendly society and distributes no profits, is offering group schemes to groups of 20 people or more, aged between 16 and 64. The group can be employees of a single firm or they can be any affinity group such as members of a trade union. or even a rotary club, a sports club or similar association. Premiums cost £13.04 a month and are the same for all, regardless of age or claims history. and cover all occupations and all parts of the country. Family membership is also available at £34.76 a month to include any number of children or dependents aged between two and 16.

Members are guaranteed a prompt, efficient service with any surgery or treatment needed completed within seven weeks of making an appointment to see a consultant. Treatment is available locally in a network of hospitals around the country or in the society's own hospital in north London. Legal & General has also recently introduced a budget bealthcare policy called Lifetime Essentials that offers a full refund of authorised inpatient and day-care treatment, including room charges, nursing care. operating theatre fees, drugs, medicines and dressings. It also normally covers the cost of diagnostic procedures such as x-rays and scans as well as radiotherapy and chemotherapy.

It covers follow-up out-patient treatment and some minor surgery at doctors' surgeries. Customers who choose to be treated free in an NHS hospital qualify for a cash sum. Monthly premiums start at £9.95 for a 24-year old, rising to £30 for a family of four with the parents under 30.

It is, of course, important with all private medical schemes to find exactly what conditions are covered and Group schemes are often available what are not. Private medical insurto employees of a single firm, and a ance does not pay the cost of living Jaguar, British Gas and BAA, who able to work because of illness. It usually does not cover long-term and incurable illnesses, and it may not cover Aids, infertility treatment, drug or alcohol abuse, mental or psychiatric illness or injuries caused by dangerous sports. Treatment abroad is also usually excluded.

Critical illness cover (CIC) is a specialised form of medical insurance that has grabbed most of the beadlines in recent years by promising to pay out a lump sum to anyone who has subsequently been diagnosed as sufferfor loyalty. There is also some evidence ing from one of six or seven killer to suggest that they are rewarded by diseases, from cancer to heart attacks, strokes, major organ transplants, toaccording to a recent report for the tal disability and other life-threatening diseases. It does not specifically cover loss of income but the lump sum can be used to pay off mortgages and ing the policybolder some capital to

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Buoyant buyers point to a bumper Christmas despite interest rate rises

Christmas comes but once a year, and when it does we all spend more. Clifford Germon investigates exactly how much we spend, and what we spend it on.

The British economy may be slowing down inexorably under the influence of rising interest rates and the growing problems exporters face in selling profitably abroad because of the strength of the pound. But consumers, usually the last to know, are becoming increasingly latest survey of consumer confidence released today by American Express, the credit card com-

Three quarters of the people polled by the British Market Research Bureau International well off or better off compared with last year, will improve further over the next 12 months. The prospects for Christmas spending look particularly good, with 48 per cent of people saying they plan to spend the same as last year and one third

expecting to spend more. this Christmas. Men on average expect to spend £733 each against £582 by the average woman. Just under a quarter of men will spend £1,000 or more, and I I per coot say they will spend that Christmas than at any other time of the year. Card amount on presents alone, but women expect to do most of the family shopping over the Christto do most of the shopping.

Generously, shrewdly, wisely or tactfully, perhaps, 86 per cent of men say that their spouse or partner is extremely good at choosing their present, compared with only 40 per cent of women who lavish similar praise on their part- ated the "extra insurance" they obtained on

Almost one third of the sample admit to having received a windfall from a building society and a similar proportion said it was "easier to or insurance company demutualising this year. and It per cent of those who admit to having cashed in their windfalls already say they will still he using some of their windfalls to finance their

John Calvertey, the chief economist at American Express Bank, says, "consumers are

in a buoyant mood. They feel better off than in the Spring, and are looking forward to a humper Christmas. Still, the experience of the early 1990s and perhaps also the rise in base rates this year leaves consumers still cautious about borrowing."

The average person describes themselves as careful rather than carefree in their approach to Christmas spending. Just over 90 per cent said they keep a close eye on their finances, 85 per cent claim they only spend what they can afford, 80 per cent say they always try to save a proportion confident and willing to spend, according to the of their income each month and 89 per cent now say they always check their monthly bank or building society statement, up from 86 per cent in April this year.

Professor Cary Cooper, professor of psychology at UMIST in Manchester, says, "The on behalf of American Express said they are as Brits, who are working longer and harder than anywhere else in Europe, see Christmas as a time and 40 per cent expect their financial situation to reward themselves for their hard work throughout the year. But there is still a strong element of careful spending. This is in contrast to the late Eighties where the spend, spend, spend culture prevailed."

A remarkable 72 per cent of the sample said The average spend on food, presents and enthey would rather do without than take out a loan tertainment is likely to be about £654 per head to finance their Christmas spending. But credit card holders expect to put 47 per cent of their Christmas spending on their cards, and four out of 10 admit they use their credit cards more over loyalty schemes come into their own at Christmas with 45 per cent of cardholders saying they mas period, with a massive 86 per cent claiming are planning to redeem their points over the Christmas period and use them to get presents for family and friends.

More than 80 per cent said that using their plastie was "more convenient" than other forms of payment, a similar number apprecigoods bought with credit cards and just over two thirds welcomed the "ability to extend payments" return or exchange purchases if they had been made on credit cards rather than cash or eheques".

But 80 per cent do not plan to spend up to their credit card limit and 57 per cent say they expect to pay off their December statement in full next month.

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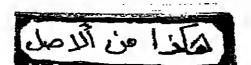
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# 3/PERSONAL FINANCE

THE INDEPENDENT SATURDAY 13 DECEMBER 1997

is that won't wealth

#### INTERNET INVESTOR

#### Net a return from electronic tracking



#### ROBIN AMLÕT

By now you will have had a chance to digest the reaction to the Government's announcement on Individual Savings Accounts (ISAs). If you want to check for yourself exactly what the proposals contain, you can view the consultative document on ISAs on the Inland Revenue's website. Further Government comment is available on the Treasury website.

Of course, the ISA is still 15 months away, leaving Tessas and PEPs as the main tax-efficient savings available to everybody. In fact, even if you don't yet have a personal equity plan it is still worth starting one now. Try not to be seduced by the kind of advertising which suggests you should: "Buy now, while stocks last!" But what sort of PEP should you have?

It is all too easy to become completely submerged in conflicting claim and counter-claim of performance. Here is some food for thought: the annual fees charged by the average fund manager can swallow as much as 33 per cent of a unit trust PEP's income. This means the income tax saving made by investing in a PEP may be wiped out by the annual charges alone.

It has been said many times that an index tracker fund should form the core of a private investor's portfolio. However, only one of the various tracker funds on offer has taken advantage of the internet and the savings it can offer in terms of costs and administration, netPEP.

netPEP tracks the FTSE 100 index through a unit trust managed by the world's leading tracking fund managers, Barclays Global Investors. Since its launch in April, the netPEP Tracker Fund has risen by around 16 per cent, broadly in line with the performance of the FTSE 100 over the same period.

Among the advantages of investing on the Internet through netPEP is the ability to value your investment at any time just by logging on to the service, Although netPEP keeps in contact with regular e-mail communications, important documents such as confirmation of units purchased are sent by post.

Once you invest, netPEP sends you a confidential password and user name so that you can check your portfolio's value over the Internet and access netPEP's investor information service. This offers information on the companies in the portfolio, including links to their websites and a forum where you can, for example, put forward questions you want. raised at company meetings.

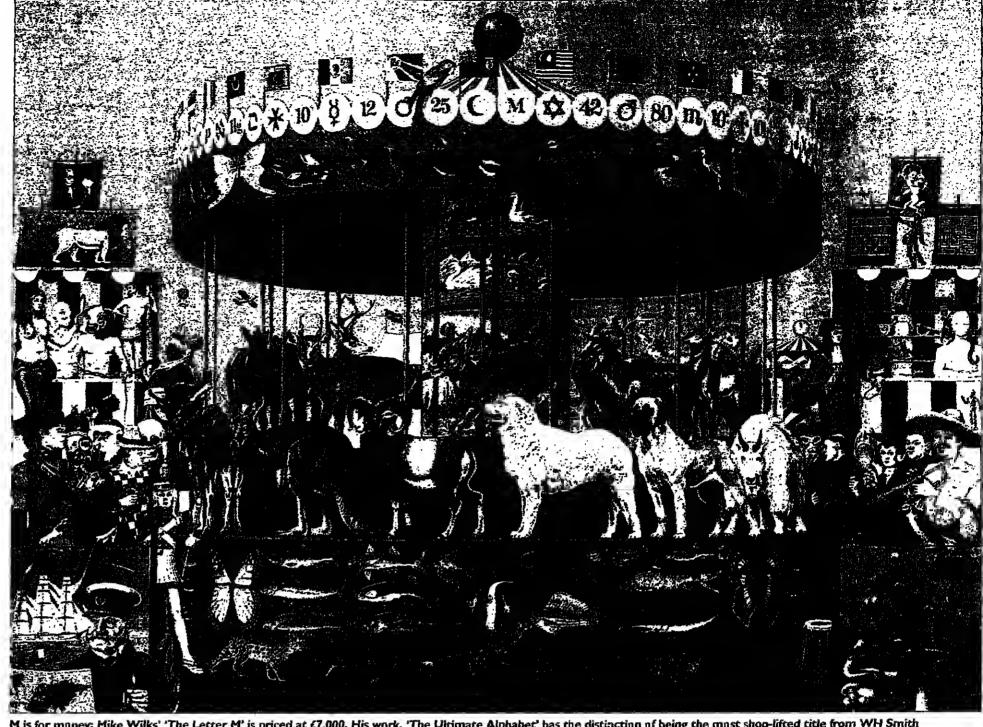
You have the option of investing in netPEP via new PEP, the transfer of an existing PEP or directly into the unit trust. There is an initial 1 per cent charge and the annual management fee is 0.35 per cent, making netPEP among the cheapest of the tracker funds on the market. The 1 per cent initial charge is waived on all investments of £25,000 or more. The minimum investment in either a PEP or the unit trust is a £1,000 lump sum or monthly savings of £250.

Although netPEP offers its application form online, it does not accept applications by e-mail. Once you have filled in the form, you must print it, sign it and return it to them by post, either with a cheque or a direct-dehit mandate.

As a Christmas come-on, netPEP is waiving its initial charge for all PEP transfers until 31 December. This means investors transferring to netPEP will only be charged the annual fee of 0.35 per cent or £3.50 for every £1,000 invested, making it the cheapest PEP on the market.

In addition to the netPEP itself, the netPEP website offers Triacker, a monthly on-line magazine providing analysis and commentary on the FTSE 100 index. Among the articles in the latest issue are a review of the current shape of the UK stock market and commentaries on the South-east Asian economies and the lessons of the crash of 1987. The magazine's regular features include a monthly commentary and price and performance information about the netPEP itself.

Inland Revenue: www.open.gov.uk/inrev Treasury: www.hm-treasury.gov.uk netPEP: www.netPEP.co.uk



M is for maney. Mike Wilks' 'The Letter M' is priced at £7,000. His work, 'The Ultimate Alphabet' has the distinction of being the most shop-lifted title from WH Smith

# The drawing power of children's fiction

A drawing of Pooh, Piglet and Robin fetched £69,000 at Christie's in July; last year a Beatrix Potter made £17,150. John Windsor finds that collectors of children's book illustrations are not playing with pocket money.

Whatever happened to Piglet's stick? In 1928, when EH Shepard first drew Piglet and Pooh sitting on a gate singing the tiddely-pom song, for AA Milne's hook The House At Pouli Corner, he gave them both sticks, like batons.

But the drawing of his that was being offered by Christie's South Kensington this week, estimated £12,000-£18,000. showed Piglet with no stick.

The answer to the riddle is that Shopard insisted on selling his drawings, so that when the publishers. Methuen, decided in 1958 to make new printing blocks for a new edition of The House at Pooh Corner, they had to ask Shepard to drawn new pictures. It was then that, for reasons we shall never know.

Shepard confiscated Piglet's stick. The same year, the new, stickless drawing sold for 3 guineas at Foyles Art Gallery, Similar Shepard drawings were sold for the same pocket-money

Collectors of children's book illustration would fight more fiercely over the original drawing, with stick.

than the later version. But Christie's on nursery walls, for the delectation of tells me she catalogues illustrations actually." strictly according to quality - the latwhether the picture was published at

From the auctioneer's point of view, she explained, a well-known artist does not need evidence of publication in order to establish rovenance.

But connoisseurs value more highly an illustration that has been published and pored over by countless tiny fingers, generating nostalgia.

The pencil and watercolour of two girls under cherry blossom by the illustrator Kate Greenaway (1846-1901), in the same sale, books like a book illustration, but no book is identified in the catalogue. Greenaway was so prolific that it would take all but a connoisseur half a day of rummaging in the British Library to find out whether her painting was ever

published. If it could be sourced to a book, the Elitim-Elitur estimate might not change, but the bidding for it would be more enthusiastic. Sketches of Ecvere and chums, dashed off by Shepard for admirers and not rated by today's connoisseurs, can still be picked up for under £500.

Not that children's book illustration is a market hursting with connoisseurs: for children's illustration while on the many auction purchases end up framed stuff of Sorheby's. 20 years ago.

South Kensington's Inken Haldane doting adults, "Yes, it's the original,

An EH Shepard of Pooh, Piglet and er, stickless Shepard, für example, was Rohin playing Pooh sticks fetched 1985, hut could manage only £32,190 elear-cut sharp, superbly done – in- £69,000 at South Kensington at Southeby's in October this year. stead of according to edition, or in July, There's nostalgia for you. A Beatrix Potter fetched £17,150 there last

Investors in search of winning formulas might calculate that illustrations with the most adult appeal - such as the flowing, rather sexy Art Neuveauish lines of Arthur Rackham (1867-19391 and Edmund Dulac (1882-1953) - would attract the broadest market and the highest prices. But toddlers never hid at auction. If it sells, it's adult stuff. Ms Haldane thinks that illustrations of toys and animals have more staying power than fictional characters that speak because there's more scope for fantasising about them.

As a happens, the markets for Rackhan, and Dulac have peaked while the farry creatures of Beatrix Potter and the for lurry creatures of EH aliepard go from strength to strength. Power, of course, was an established ilinstrator before turning to children's

Bonhams, the London auctioneers. are making their debut in the children's book illustration market on Tuesday t I tamt - South Ken have been holding dedicated sales for a decade - and have as their consultant Mike Heseltine, who founded the auction market

His records confirm that prices for Rackham and Dulac peaked around

levelled off after peaking in the mid-£600-£800 in next week's sale for an original Greenaway pictorial border for September in the Almanack for 1891, showing five girls with haskers of

Proof of the unpredictability of the market is the sensational prices fetched hy over 300 Noddy pictures by Harmsen Van Der Beek at Sotheby's Blyton centenary sale in October. They raised £359.631, 95.42 per cent being sold by

M: Heseltine says; "You never ithow when an artist is going to take off or reach a plateau."

Britain is pre-eminent in living children's book illustrators. They are a canny lot. They either sit on their pictures, refusing to sell, or hotfoor it to the London gallery of Chris Beetles, the ne plus ultra of dealers in original illustrations, who gets the best

An exception is fantasy artist Mike Wilks, a 50-year-old south Londoner whose closely packed acrylics have a compulsive appeal for both children and adults - his The Ultimate Alphabet (1986) sold a quarter of a million copies and was WH Smith's most shop-lifted

Mr Heseltine and Sir Tim Rice, Andrew Lloyd Wehber's librettist, have 1985. A Dulae watercolour of Eugenie both written introductions to the catand the Nightingale sold for £26,400 in alogue of Wilks's current one-man show at the Gekoski Gallery - a sudden sell-off of his works, hoarded over Similarly, Greenaway prices have a lifetime. Wilks's The Lener M, from The Ultimate Alphabet, is priced £7,000. Eighties. Hence his modest estimate of Prices for other acrylics range from £3,500 to £15,000.

Even more perplexing than Wilks's conundrums is Mr Heseltine's listing of the new generation of illustrators who hoard their work: Nicola Bayley, Roger Dean, Patrick Woodroffe, Kit Williams. Back in 1981, he sold a tiny Bayley's picture of a mouse for £350 at Sotheby's. H. iast sold a Woodroffe 10 years ago.

The big contemporary names on sale at Chris Beedes' are Quentin Blake and Michael Foreman - who are buth artschool trained. Blake used to be head of the illustration department at the RCA and Foreman has lectured widely at London art schools.

In Bectles' current show, there are some of Blake's snappy, throw-away ink drawings for £750-£1,450 and technically accomplished Foreman watercolours for £950-£1,150. But if you want to buy from Mr Heseltine's list of uncommercial artists, you will have to doorstep them.

Mike Wilks, entry by appointment at the Gekoski Gallery, Pied Bull Yard, 15a Bloomsbury Square, London WCI (0171-404 6676). Chris Beetles, The Illustrators, 8 & 10 Ryder Street, St James's, London SWI (0171-839 7551).

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#### BRIAN TORA

tiful"? He should see us in the City now. The dash for critglobal player in almost every-

latest part of the financial services business to embrace among retail providers. the new paradigm. Since Merrills sought to devour our No 1 independent fund management group - Mercury Asset Management - it seems the pace is hotting up. PDFM seems set to be put together with the Swiss Bank Corporation's investment management business, while Gartmore has already fallen top four pension fund managers, retains its independent status. Lower down the rankings, LGT is up for sale. Even \$40bn under management is viewed as not enough to play with the hig boys. No after on behalf of clients, is

The big four - Mercury. PDFM, Gartmore and Schroders - dominate pension fund management in this country. According to its marketing material, Mercury British companies, at least in trade have yet to be seen. part. Yet all of these husinesses have found it difficult to extend beyond these large and relatively sophisticated pond in which to fish. But even a hig local pond is insufficient these days. Moreover, with more and more Brian Tora is Chairman of the portfolios, you need that lit-

Was it not Dr Schumacher the extra to persuade investors who preached "small is beau-you provide real added-value.

Size has not been considered as quite so important in ical mass is positively breath- the retail market, but this taking. And critical mass could change too. Unit trusts means size. It seems that received a much needed fillip these days you have to be a from the PEP market, but the introduction of ISAs will limthing if you are to count at all, it the belp these tax-efficient Fund management is the vehicles can provide. We may soon see the urge to merge

Now, I would not necessarily preach the size gospet. but you can see what is happening on the global stage. America dominates global financial services. The strength of its own market gives it an advantage that no other nation is likely to match. Europe could come close - hence the flurry of to National Westminster deals on the Continent, but Bank. Only Schroders, of the whether investors will get a hetter deal as a consequence is a very moot point indeed.

In the end, the larger an investment group becomes. the more its investment freedom becomes restricted. I watch developments with wonder that Newton, with a interest and hope that a good bare £10bn of funds looked manager with a clever idea will never find it impossible seeking a partner. Big - beau- to set up a new, independent tiful? You'd better believe it. company.

Meantime, Asian contagion rears its head again. Not only does the IMF bale-out for Korea look inadequate. there is no sign its government has grasped the nettle. Morelooks after 50 of the Top 100 over, the effects on world

Next year is unlikely to be as profitable as 1997 which delivered a level of profsbores. Britain is, in fact, a itahility few could have foreseen. The new year may contain just as many surprises for us, though.

money moving into indexed Greig Middleton Investment Strategy Committee

# STOCK MARKET GUIDE: THE P/E RATIO

# The tool investors can use to determine a company's potential for growth



A company's p/e could be described as the City's confidence ratio in that share

Rating a share's prospects is not easy. But one common yardstick reveals the market's view. John Andrew continues his series on the share page with an explanation of the price-earnings ratio.

The penultimate column on The Independent's shares page is headed "P/E". the abbreviation for "price-earnings ratio" one of the traditional tools used to assess whether a share is worthwhile, "It is widely quoted, but little understood," says Gill Nott, the chief executive of ProShare, the organisation which promotes share ownership.

The p/e ratio is a simple concept. It is calculated by dividing the company's current share price by earnings per share over the last 12 months. Earnings per share must not be confused with dividends. The latter is the income distributed to shareholders. On the other hand, earnings per share generally refers to the net profit after the deduction of the dividend payable on preference shares. These are shares which pay a fixed dividend to shareholders each year.

The ratio indicates how many years it would take for the net profit attributable to each share to equal the current share price. As a rule, the higher the p/e, the more "expensive" the share. It may be also be viewed as the City's confidence ratio. Generally, the higher the p/e, the higher the market's regard for the

A high p/e could indicate the com-

pany's performance is bounding ahead of its most recently published earnings. In other words, investors are expecting increased profits to be announced and consequently the sbares are in demand. Investors are prepared to pay a higher price now that reflects better things in the future. Of course, only time will reveal whether this is a correct judge-

On the other hand, a company which is doing hadly may have a bigh p/e. This reflects the view that it may be the subject of a takeover bid. Even the whiff of a possible hid can increase a company's share price.

Glancing down the p/e column in our share price page, you will notice that there are one or two gaps. This is because in these cases, such factors as taxation, income distribution or objectives, makes the ratio meaningless or

The p/e ratio for a particular company can differ from one publication to another. For example, the ratios in The Independent may differ from those in a stockhroker's newsletter. The reason for such differences is that although the concept of the ratio is simple, one of the' factors in its calculation is complex.

The current share price is a matter of fact. The differences arise because of the figure used for "earnings per share". There are three basic ways of defining carnings: the nil; the net and the maximum methods. An explanation of the three methods, which centre on how the payment of dividends affects a company's mainstream tax, is complex and it is

sufficient for our purposes to say that each one produces a different result.

There is another reason as to why differences in the p/e calculations can differ. The development of UK fiscal law over recent years has resulted in tax provisions being more subjective than in the past. If . adjustments are made, for whatever reason, to the figures supplied by the compamy, variations in p/e ratios will arise.

It is also worth noting that often a prospective p/c ratio is given in stockbrokers' newsletters or press comment. This simply means an estimate of the company's future earnings per share has been used in the calculations as opposed to the last published or historic earnings. Sometimes you will see a reference to

a particular p/e ratio being "undemanding". This means that the ratio is low . compared with similar companies. In other words, the company's growth potential is not considered to be high. As it is easier for a company to miss high growth expectations than ones which are low, the p/e is said to be undemanding.

Remember that if a company bas a high p/e ratio, it is no guarantee that the future will live up to expectations. The market's confidence may be completely misplaced. Furthermore, two companies may have identical p/es based on present earnings, but one may bave far better prospects than the other.

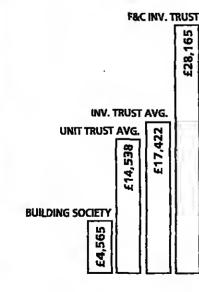
The p/c is only one of the yardsticks that professional use when assessing shares. Investors certainly should not use: it in isolation when making their decisions. We will take a look at more investment yardsticks next week.

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trusts run by Framlington investing in the underperform. UK. The rest can go into one of a range of seven trusts run by other investment managers, to cash in on prospects in Europe. the Far East and Japan.

at least 50 per cent of the money invested must be managed by them. Framlington, road funds. The risk could carry a Werdict: Very suitable for Marks out of five: Four.

The deal: Put a minimum of £100 a month. very reasonably, is only asking for 25 per higher reward - and the names are trusted. quarter of your money must go into four the risk that Framlington's managers might

well-suited to the international trusts run Foreign & Colonial. Fleming and this type of product commonly insist that adviser at the London-based Clark Conway

or a £1.(XX) lump sum, into a PEP with cent. This means that three-quarters of the Drawbacks and risks: Withdraw your in-Framilington and take your choice of two money invested can be put with other man-vestment from an investment trust built into ranges of investment trusts. At least a legers, lessening the investor's exposure to this PEP and it will cost you I per cent of your investment - no matter when you withdraw. This could amount to more than the Investors willing to take a small risk are, normal initial charge, which bas been wiped from this product. In contrast to most by other managers such as Schroder. unit trusts, this could eliminate the benefit of the reasonable annual management Plus points: Investment managers who offer Edinburgh. According to Jayne Caudle, an fee of just 1 per cent. However, other charges are also low.

Verdict: Very suitable for the risk-lover.

#### LOOSE CHANGE

areas came down although there were some isolated increases especially for retired couples in bungalows, traditionally the lowest priced category. Rates should remain steady into next year.

Bornwers are tending to emolidate their vices. The number of personal loan custoniers who consolidated their existing

Contents insurance premiums are still—ers moving their mortgage to the Abbey. holding steady for the majority of home- A deposit of 5 per cent and a £250 booknwners, according to insurance brokers ing fee is required but capped rates can Premium Search, with 62 per cent en- fall but not rise. A new discount rate mortjoying a price freeze or fall in the second gage 2.5 per cent below the variable rate half of 1997, compared with 70 per cent until the end of January 2000 is available in the first half of the year. Costs in most with a 25 per cent deposit. Borrowers are locked in for a further year.

More than 15 million people will make a New Year's resolution, half of them financial, according to a survey for IFA Promotion, but only a quarter of the total will keep it. Almost half the financial resodebts and concentrate on a single lender - lutions involve saving up for specific items in response to the 1.25 per cent rise in base—such as a car or holiday, a quarter intend rates this year, says Colonial Financial Ser- turspend less money and a fifth want to

Abbey National has introduced a new of 31 January to avoid an automatic penaltil the end of January 2003 for borrow- Clark Whitehill. The end of January is also gross on any balance.

the deadline for paying outstanding tax hills in order to avoid interest.

Interest rates on National Savings Income Bonds, Investment Accounts and the Treasurer's Account went up this week. The top rate on income bonds went op from 6.45 per cent to 7 per cent yesterday and will rise again to 7.25 per cent on

London-hased letting agents Ludlow Thompson are offering a free guide to investment in residential property. Copies are available from Freepost London E1 8BR or call 01233-211551.

Nationwide Building Society is offering dehis rose 27 per cent over the past year. New year resolutions should remember 2 Save account and existing customers. to submit their tax return by the deadline who save an extra pound a free 1998 box capped mongage rate at 8.39 per cent oniv of \$100. Say chartered accommands

Draw. Both accounts pay 7.2 per cent

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# 5/PERSONAL FINANCE

of divorce A peak of divorce petitions typically begins after the Christmas break. Traumatic enough in itself, the task of dividing the worldly goods can bring its own problems.

Gwenda Joyce-Brophy points

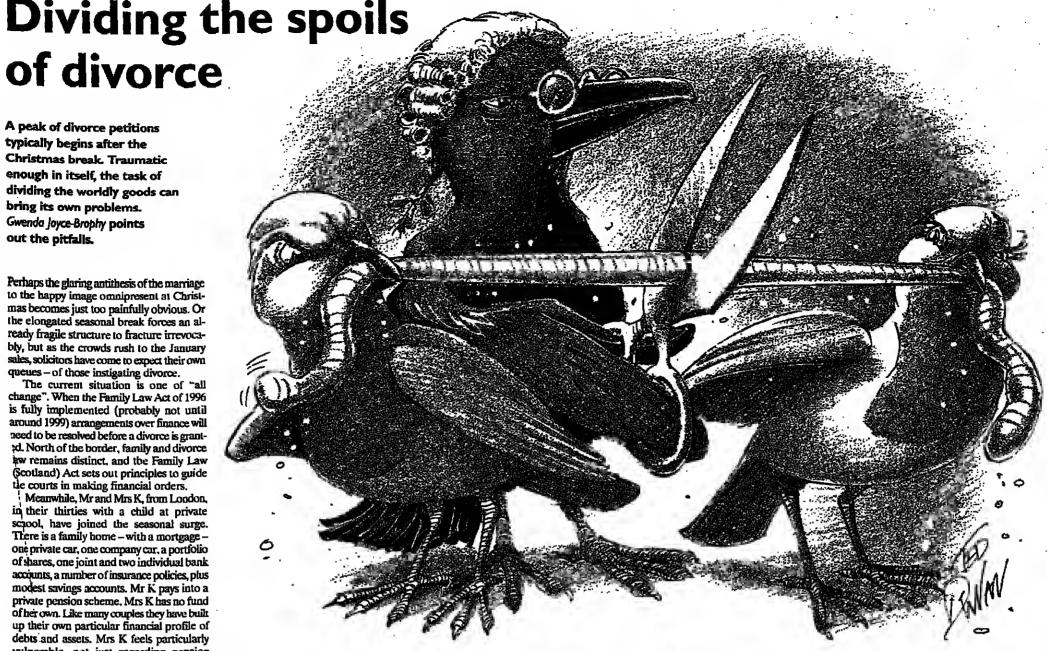
out the pitfalls.

Perhaps the glaring antithesis of the marriage to the happy image omnipresent at Christmas becomes just too painfully obvious. Or the elongated seasonal break forces an already fragile structure to fracture irrevocably, but as the crowds rush to the January sales, solicitors have come to expect their own queues - of those instigating divorce.

The current situation is one of "all change". When the Family Law Act of 1996 is fully implemented (probably not until around 1999) arrangements over finance will need to be resolved before a divorce is grantd. North of the border, family and divorce kw remains distinct, and the Family Law (Scotland) Act sets out principles to guide tie courts in making financial orders.

Meanwhile, Mr and Mrs K, from London, in their thirties with a child at private school, have joined the seasonal surge. There is a family home - with a mortgage one private car, one company car, a portfolio of shares, one joint and two individual bank accounts, a number of insurance policies, plus modest savings accounts. Mr K pays into a private pension scheme, Mrs K has no fund of her own. Like many couples they have built up their own particular financial profile of debts and assets. Mrs K feels particularly vulnerable, not just regarding pension provision, but since she also feels less au fait with matters financial.

One course of action is to enlist specialist services. Hill Martin Financial Management, for example, have a Matrimonial Litigation Support Service, which offers independent advice tailored to the individual - including their lifestyle and risk profile. But is this a luxury, the preserve of the super-rich? "Absolutely not," says the group's Mark Ormerod, who suggests a threshold figure of around £100,000 in assets. An initial no-



a fixed fee is quoted. Duplication is not an issue. "We are not in the role of solicitors, nor do we get involved in negotiation," says Mr Ormerod. For example, if some of the share portfolio is in Mr K's name alone, and Mrs K suspects that her husband is attempting to dispose of them, advice and action would strictly be the domain of her solicitor. "Our role is to assist the client darify the current situation - and to plan abead, As the divorce progresses from the pre to the post-settlement stage priorities evolve cost meeting analyses a client's situation, and to making the best of the settlement - and have themselves been utilizing the services

adjusting to the financial constraints imposed by it," adds Ormerod, "We can also attempt to minimise the tax consequences of longer-

Such groups will bave a team of specialists in different areas, with the most appropriate drawn on as required. In essence they, plus your solicitor, form a temporary, complementary team that specialises on your particular case. Indeed, many solicitors who feel out of their depth in the murky waters of pension valuation

organisations who will perform valuations include the Divorce Corporation (for other "professionals") and the Society of Pension Consultants. Pension valuation remains an issue not

yet satisfactorily resolved in the larger, ongoing story of pensions in divorce. Pensions can be the major asset when equity in property is low. (In Scotland things are simpler, a spouse is entitled to a share of the contribution made only during the marriage.)

of organisations like Hill Martin. Other a pension as the "cash equivalent transfer value" - equivalent of how much a pension scheme holder would be paid if they were to transfer the money from the current to another pension fund, although, according to Helen Carlick, author of The Which? Guide to Divorce, this valuation method can undershoot the real value, especially of occupational (as opposed to personal) pensions.

Courts can now "earmark" - set aside a share of a spouse's pension. Counter to the concept of a clean break, there are problems Current regulations define the value of too with the death of the pension-scheme (written inquiries only).

John Armit Wines January Sale...in December?

member pre-retirement, or the remarriage of either partner. A system of compensation is often preferred, and while a judge cannot get into the pension fund itself, he does have the power to redistribute other assets.

Well and good in theory, but financial constraints can mean that no money is actually available. Pension splitting (the allocated pension share remains in the scheme) has its own supporters, including lobby group Fairshares among others, but the debate continues, and it is not presently an option.

Finally, if the division of any of the assets becomes 100 fraught during the negotiations, mediation, where participants are encouraged to make informed decisions and negotiate agreement, may be a way uut of

Bone up with specialist publications: The Which? Guide to Divorce has chapters on Financial Planning for Divorce', 'Money in Divorce' and Pensions', and on the situation in Scotland. £10.99 p&p free. call 0800 252100. The Finance of Divorce, by Peter Vaines, publisher Pan, £6.99.

· A checklist of assets is a good way of getting organised - include property. vehicles, valuables; occupational pensions. superannuation or personal plans; any compensation paid for having been mis-sold a pension; current and savings bank or building society accounts; stocks and sbares, unit trusts, PEPs, Tessas: life insurance policies, and redemption values of investments yet to mature.

· With their specialised knowledge the services of a financial management group could be useful. The more accurate the information you give on the range and value of assets, the more focused and valuable

 Try to agree as much as possible with your spouse. Fighting over every little aspect is costly, and can result in a downward spiral where what is in the "pot" is even further

The Divorce Corporation: 011462616 Family Mediators Association: 01273 747750 Hill Martin Financial Managements: London office: 0171 233 2777; Bristol office: 0117 927 9985; National Family Mediation: 0171 383 5993. The Society of Pension Consultants: 92 Fleet Street, London EC-IY IDH

**Personal** 

Finance

# How to keep track active **funds**



THE **JONATHAN DAVIS** COLUMN

Since I started writing a few months ago about the ments of index tracking funds, 1 have received a lot of comments from both inside and outside the fund management industry. Many have been polite and supportive, others, inevitably, less so. What is clear is that the argument about the ments of active investment strikes at the very heart of the nature of the investment management business. It also throws into stark relief the ambiguous nature of most people's attitudes to the question of

risk and return.

As many active fund managers quite rightly point out, the ease for index tracking funds rests on a curious paradox. The reason why most active fund managers fail to outperform the market averages has something to do with the fees and transaction costs which they incur. But it is also partly about the fact that stock markets are fundamentally competitive places where thousands of talented and highly paid people are in a struggle to outperform each other. By definition, if your objective is to do better than average. this contest is one which, in any given year, half of the contestants simply cannot win. To go on winning year after year becomes progressively harder still. which is why it is so rarely achieved over tong periods of time.

The intensity of competition in financial markets is the hard kernel of truth which underlies the flawed academic notion that stock markets are efficient, in the sense that they discount all available information. The paradox is that index tracking only works because markets are competitive. Yet if everyone were to switch to an indextracking strategy, the markets would cease to be competitive and the strategy would then cease to work. Everyone would be perfectly legitimate so husy chasing each other's jail that there would be nohody left to do the hard competitive analysis which is what makes most shares in the first place reasonably valued most of the time. Quite when you reach

the point is a matter for dehate. Is it when 25 per cent of all the money under management is essentially following an index-tracking strategy? Or 50 per cent?

Or 75 per cent? There are as many answers as there are estimates of how much money is already invested in this way. (It is one thing to monitor how many pension funds, for example, are explicitly following an index-tracking policy - it seems to be about 25 per cent of the total - but quite another to know bow many other funds are in effect indexing most of their money without explicitly admitting the fact.)

That there is such a point is not in doubt. My view, for what it is worth, is that we are still some way short of reaching the point at which the marginal returns to active management start to rise again. The number of people employed in the securities business worldwide, for example, continues to rise, as does the amount of money under professional management. While an increasing amount of research effort is now being cbannelled into places such as cuntinental Europe and the emerging markets, there is no sign of any let up in the competitive monitoring of leading share prices in the established London and New York markets. Even had we reached the

apotheosis point for index tracking, which I am sure we have not it still would not follow that for most ordinary investors active management was a better bet, it would then be a question of assessing the cost and risk of an active strategy, relative to that of taking what the market averages have to offer. The thing which most investors and most pension fund trustees - seem to find hardest to accept is that, in stock market investment, average performance is a objective, especially if it comes in a bundle with low costs. This is only another way of saying that for anyone with a reasonably diversified portfolio of shares, the higgest influence on the way its value moves

will be the way the market as a whole moves, not the performance of the individual shares.

There is no doubt that a few very successful professional investors can consistently outperform the pack over long periods of time (as it happens, I have written a book, coming out early next year, which profiles some of them). But unless you know how to pick them out, it does not follow automatically that you will he able to benefit from the fact.

If you are able to do so, or if you have the time to pick your own shares and to find a successful formula for doing so, then that is obviously what you should do. Just recognise, however, that the odds are that you will end up doing about average - or maybe

Not all is lost, however, even if you cannot see your own way to outperform the market over time. One way to have consistently beaten the averages in the last few years has been to buy shares in the fund management companies themselves. Mercury Asset Management (which has just been bid for by Merrill Lynch), Perpetual and Invesco have all done exceptionally well for investors. Even M&G and Henderson have mostly kept pace with the index, despite having a number of internal and competitive issues to What you get with one of

the better fund management companies is not just the benefit of exposure to rising markets their income rises automatically as the value of their funds under management goes up - but also the chance to huy hack (as it were) some of the juicy management fees that make active management such an expensive business in the first place. The party does tend to stop when stock markets go into reverse, however - so, in opting for fund management company shares, you are still partially back in the husiness of trying to call the market yourself. And that, as we know, is the hardest part of

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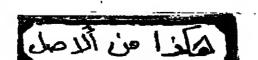
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# The benefits of returning to a state pension

Recent changes to legislation have slashed the value of contracting out of the state pension scheme. Andrew Verity finds that millions of personal pension holders could be better off back in Serps.

If picking a pension were like doing a dance, there would be just one name for the annual routine of deciding whether to be in the state earnings related pension scheme (Serps) or not. The hokey-kokey.

Every year, the 6 million holders of personal pensions, plus another half a million in сотралу-гип money purchase

schemes, are expected to make a crucial decision which can bave a profound effect on their wealth - or poverty - in retirement. Should they he in, or out, of the state earnings-related pension scheme?

Currently, most of the millions of private pension savers are out of the scheme. By "contracting out", the saver forgoes the henefits of Serps in exchange for a rebate of national insurance

contributions which then goes into a private scheme.

If the rebate to the private scheme is large enough, and the return on the investments it buys is high enough, personal pension holders will be better off with a private scheme until they reach a "pivotal age", usually 47 for women and 52 for men.

But for future pensioners, the whole question of contracting out to a private scheme has been thrown into confusion by two recent events, triggering warnings that millions may be better off returning to the state scheme earlier. And actuaries are warning that some may be hetter off staying in the state scheme - full stop.

Gordon Brown, the Chancellor of the their private savings, worth hundreds of a refusal

Exchequer, to abolish tax credits on pounds, whittled away to nothing by the flatdividends, reducing the return on invest-rate fees. ments which a pension fund can expect to to pay benefits to match Serps.

effect slashed. While every saver formerly received a rebate worth 4.8 per cent of their the killer blow." earnings, these now change with age. Personal pension savers under 30 now get a holders of personal pensions, mostly on rebate worth 3.1 per cent of their earnings: incomes of less than £10,000 a year, who at 50 they get 9 per cent.

What your pension will be worth compared to SERPS

Assumed rate of

above national

According to leading actuaries Bacon

& Woodrow, the seemingly generous

spirit bebind the new rehates was a

phantom. Even the Government Actuary

noted that the new rebates were too

small to cover the amount that went out

to most private pension providers in flat-

rate monthly fees and other expenses. Far

from making it easier to stay out of

Government considers raising the level of

rebates - an exercise that could cost hun-

savers should not be contracting out.

Potentially, savers who have been con-

Serps, it made it harder.

Personal pension as a % of SERPS forgone

Present age of personal pension members

Brian Wilson, a B&W expert on earn. If a pension fund is expected to grow contracting out, said: "My suspicion is that by less, then it is less likely at retirement the Budget changes probably knock out contracting out of Serps as an option for Second, in April, when the 1995 Pen-most people. I'm surprised that so many sions Act came into force, rehates were in people are contracted out; I would have thought that the Budget change would be

Worst of all, there are 3.5 million make no extra contribution of their own

> above the rehate. The average amount that goes into their pension every year is usi £350 – an amount so small that fees could erode it to nothing by the time the saver retires.

Since the Budget. the Government has declined to say whether it will revise rebates upwards. The IFA Association. which represents independent financial advisers, last week told the Government that its members would be forced to advise millions of clients to return to Serps unless more information was available.

Last week. John Denham, the pensions minister at the DSS, bowed to

relentless pressure from the pensions industry by announcing be would instruct the Government Actuary to look at rebates. He added: "We are committed to ensuring that individuals have good quality second pensions and wish to enable as many people as possible to achieve this through [private] provision."

However, even if a change is considered necessary, it will not happen until April 1999 Bacon & Woodrow warns that unless the at the earliest. The IFA Association wants to know as soon as possible whether a rise in rehates will occur in order that its dreds of millions of pounds - millions of members can give informed advice. Savers concerned about their pension should expect advice from their adviser or com-The first event was the July decision of tracting out for just a few years could see pany early next year - and should not accept

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- Loan to value

### What the Chancellor needs to do before anyone can plan for the future

The sight and sound of the Government falling off a succession of financial high wires is not an encouraging one, unless you happen to he a Conservative politician. Last month it was the special treatment for tobacco sponsorsbip of Formula One racing, last week it was the belly-flop launch of the individual savings account and this week the painful consequences when plans to cut benefits for single parents who will not or cannot find work tripped over the welfare to work programme.

It is increasingly clear that ever since it came to power this Government has been making policy piecemeal, when what is needed is an all-embracing review of taxation. mortgages, pensions, benefits and savings which will let savers. investors, borrowers, financial planners and their customers bave all the facts they need to make longterm financial decisions.

Take pensions. Proper pension planning needs long-term stability and certainty, yet the pensions industry does not know whether it is coming or going. Everyone agrees that the role of the state has to be scaled down, that company pension schemes linked to final salary and length of service are giving way to portable personal pension plans. Yet millions of people have no private pension plans in position and most of those who do are not putting away enough each year to be comfortable in retirement.

The Government has set out proposals for stakeholder pensions to try to hring in the 10 million people who do not yet have a private pension plan. They have been widely welcomed but we still do not know whether they will be available to existing pension holders as well, or what the tax regime will be.

But almost the Chancellor's first act in the July Budget was to cut the existing tax relief pension that funds enjoy, a move which will reduce the prospective pensions a given sum will buy in future by up to 10 per cent. The rebates on national insurance payable to people who opt out of the state earnings-related pension scheme (Serps) have been out back to the

point where many financial advisers think more people, should consider moving back into Serps. A new review of rebates bas been promised but will

not be operative until April 1999. A Royal Commission has just been set up to review ways of providing affordable Insurance policies to help people pay for longterm residential and nursing care. but the commission will not report for 12 months, it could he two to three years before it is on the statute book and there are no clues how it might fit into the overall tax and savings picture. Companies like PPP Healthcare bave promised that anyone who huys a policy now will not be disadvantaged by any future changes, but this is hardly a recipe to encourage customers to buy now. and this is not a business where time is on the side of the purchaser.

The Chancellor also plans to reform the tax system, but this only creates uncertainty about the future of tax-free lump sums which are such a vital part of the appeal of personal pensions. Suggestions that the Treasury would like to remove tax relief on contributions to pension funds and switch it to pensions in payment, so that pensions are treated the same way as tax-free investments may well have an intellectual appeal, as well as improving the Treasury's own cash flow by several billions a year. But until the issue is cleared up, investors do not know whether to het on a pension or a PEP

Well they will soon, if the Paymaster General has his way and the lifetime limit on the tax-free savings accounts that will replace Tessas and PEPs is pegged at £50,000. That is a nice little tax-free nest-egg hut nothing like enough on its own to provide a comfortable income for life. Now I have some sympathy for the Chancellor hecause someone somewhere has to pay some tax and the line did need drawing on PEPs some time ago, But for obvious political reasons no Tory government was going to take unpopular decisions that could be left to Labour.

However, the proposed £50,000 limit is going to force far too many people to rethink their financial planning from 1999. Likewise, the Government should have lifted the ceiling on Tessas by £1,000 a year instead of imposing a £1,000 limit on cash investments in an ISA. Meanwhile, the working poor will never be able to save conventionally. They need something really worthwhile, like a national insurance rebate that cannot be spent until they retire.

The rumours have been going round that the Chancellor plans to abolish top rate tax relief on pension contributions. Although it creates a sense of relief when he does not do so, in the long run proper investment planning is impossible unless investors know the tax environment in which they are working.

Lack of information over the future of capital gains tax and inheritance tax is also creating uncertainty. It simply helps advisers and accountants to sell avoidance plans that may or may not turn out to be effective. The Chancellor missed one chance in the green budget last month to introduce reforms which would have let investors know where they stand.

The latest round of rumours suggest that the Chancellor is also planning to reform separate taxation of married couples, although no one seems to be sure whether he intends to restore the incentives to married couples the previous government had progressively reduced; or whether, as some alarmists think, he is planning to tighten controls on the transfer of assets between spouses as part of a move to make inheritance tax more effective. That, in turn, would create a new set of rules governing lifetime gifts and asset transfers between spouses and sow more confusion into the divorce law where plans for pension splitting are slowly emerging.

If there really is a master plan in the Chancellor's mind and there really is logic and order in the apparent chaos I will he the first to take my hat off to him when the reform is complete, the loopholes have been closed and the financial services industry can get down to lifetime financial planning for its clients. But the prospects are not encouraging.

# 7/PENSIONS



# The ghost of scandals past ...

Most people still do not realise that some personal pension plans offer a very good deal to all their plan holders, while others provide an appalling deal to many, and sometimes most, of their customers. It is not just the published charges which eat up the benefits, John Chapman explains. Transferring your pension plan, stopping payment of premiums and retiring early can all seriously damage your wealth in stealthy ways.

Three years into a new regime featuring disclosure of charges, it is clear that the regulations have not made the best of it. They have focused on requiring lengthy descriptions of products to individual consumers. They have made no effort to make or encourage comparisons of the effects of charges, which was the real aim of disclosure. As a result, the hulk of consumers are unaware that they should steer clear of the many poor products that are being vigorously sold.

The danger signals were clear two years ago. Given the different incidence of charges, and the manipulations to finance high maturity payouts for the few through penalties on the many stopping early, Office of Fair Trading (OFT) reports had pointed to the importance of comparisons of the effects of charges at early, mid-way and maturity stages of plans.

To stimulate debate, I suggested ABC ratings at three stages in the life of plans. An AAA rating would indicate good returns at all stages, while a CBA rating would indicate poor returns when stopping early, moderate when stopping mid-way, and a good maturity payout for the small minority reaching that stage.

After much discussion with the industry, Money Marketing, a leading paper for independent financial advisers (IFAs), adopted the ABC rating system and has used it in its two product surveys for the last two years. Sadly, however, the national newspapers, with the notable exception of The Independent, have given little publicity to this rating system. The financial regulators have not encouraged its use or the use of any rating system. Hence disclosure has been a botched job.

What makes pension plans so complicated and so different is the variety of charges used by companies to recoup their, often very different, levels of expenses. There are initial charges of around 5 per cent, and annual fund management charges of around I per cent. In addition, there can be heavy charges through reduced allocations of premiums, or through "capital units" which are valueless unless held to maturity and which attract swingeing annual levies if so held. There are also introduction and annual fees, and

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two: panto Scrooge

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company accords to you to grow with their investment performance.

The ABC system of rating does not tell you how many people are likely to affected by charges at such stages on different pension plans. Here the persistency figures published each year by the Personal Investment Authority are increasingly useful. These show that on average, after three years, 34 per cent of pension plan holders with direct sales force (DSF) companies had stopped paying premiums, compared with 22 per cent of plans sold by IFAs. Three-year lapse rates varied from 10 per cent with Standard Life to 55 per cent with Guardian. I have assumed follow-on lapse rates averaging B per cent each year for DSF sales and 6 per cent for IFA sales. On such a basis the proportions of 30-year plans held to maturity would vary from over 20 per cent with some companies to only 5 per cent with others.

Persistency figures can be combined with projected transfer values of each company, assuming a 9 per cent a year growth in funds. For a 30-year plan with premiums of £200 a month transfer values after two years vary greatly, from £5,408 with Equitable Life to £1,390 with Abbey Life. For each company a break-even year can be derived, when the transfer value indicated by projections exceeds the accumulated premiums paid. The proportions of plan holders stopping premiums before breaking even and their average losses are shown by company in the table. It appears that on average over a third of plans result in losses on transfer, and that with some companies the proportion may be over 60 per cent.

Most plan holders, however, do not transfer but go "paid-up", ie they stop paying their premiums for various reasons and leave their net savings to grow to their maturity date with the same company. Unfortunately, the disclosure regime has somehow failed to require the disclosure of paid-up values accorded by companies. Luckily, a survey by the IFA Alan Lakey, published in Money Management in November, has revealed what these paid-up values are. In most cases they are the same as transfer values. hut in about a quarter of plans they are much higher, But such figures are illusory; many are only pitched higher so that companies can maximise their charges, typically through annual levies on notional capital units. Another revelation of this survey is that some paid-up values at the same level as transfer values also include extraordinary charges, as indicated by the low maturity values arising from them.

The projected rates of return for plan holders going paid-up at various stages can now be estimated, assuming 9 per cent annual growth. At two years they vary from 8 per cent a year or over with Equitable Life and Marks & Spencer to under 2 per cent with Allied Dunbar and Lincoln. After five years the gap ranges from 8.3 to 5.8 per cent a year, and after 20 years often significant penalties if you transfer your from 8.3 to 7 per cent a year. Although the gap plan, retire early, or simply stop paying your narrows, the crucial point is that those sold

The Corporate Bond PEP

premiums and go "paid up", leaving what the policies with high-charge companies face an enormous handicap compared with those with lowcharge companies. Many of them will stop paying premiums early and receive very poor returns, whereas if they were with a low-charge company they stand to get a good return whether they stop early or not.

The proportions of plan holders likely to receive returns of various levels can be estimated. Those receiving appallingly low returns of under 5 per cent a year are shown in the table. With several companies over a quarter and even

towards half of plans result in such poor returns. A new indicator can now be introduced. The "average plan return" can be calculated from the projections of returns from going paid-up in any year and of those stopping in those years.

As shown, such projected returns vary from over B per cent to under 5 per cent. The average plan return reflects the charges, their levels and structures, and lapse rates. It picks up features like paid-up plans having no value until say a year's premiums have been paid, which may elude the ABC ratings. The average plan return does not, however, indicate the structure of charges, as the ABC ratings do. In effect, the two approaches complement each other to pre-

sent a useful picture. Of course, the actual returns will depend on investment performances as well. Any company with consistently had performance should be required to explain itself. But in the early years, when the effects of charges can be so great, variations in performance can have only marginal effects. Towards the later stages of the life of policies investment performances will be more important, but closing a gap of I per cent a year for each of 20 or 30 years is a pretty tall order.

The table also shows the new income for regular premium pensions for each company. It is worth adding that in 1966 the four companies at the bottom of the table for which figures are available, ie Allied Dunbar, Barclays, Skandia and Lincoln, achieved sales increases of 11 per cent, 16 per cent, 73 per cent and 22 per cent respectively.

What does the table tell us? Can companies, as the fog lifts on their activities, continue with charging and selling practices resulting in substantial proportions of their plans bringing losses or very poor returns for their plan holders? Can the regulators maintain their line that they are only interested in selling practices, not in what is being sold? Can they defend the apparent error in not requiring the effects of going paid up to be disclosed?

Can the Government really continue to subsidise the vast numbers of plans with losses or poor returns? Can all such parties scandalously continue to sit back while hundreds of thousands of consumers are sold poor-value pension plans because they not had the interest, energy or guts to do anything effective about it, like giving widespread publicity to a rating system

to do the future

#### ILLUSTRATIVE LISTING OF PENSION PLANS BY RATINGS

On Transfer On Goit			On Going Paid Up	ioing Paid Up or to Maturity			
1	Company*	Plans losing	Average loss	% of plans with	Average Plan	Ratings, earl	
	(new income 1996/£m)	%	£	returns under 5%	return (%pa)	mid and fina stages	
	•					56-5	
Ì	Equitable (300)	03	-	<b>0</b> ·	B.3	A+A+A+	
1	Marks&Spencer (na)	05	-	0	B.1	A+AA+	
(	Scottish Widows (70)	16	110	0	7.B	AAA	
ļ	Virgin (na)	(na)	(na)	(na)	7.B	AAA	
1	Alliance & Leicester (na)	(na)	(na)	(na)	7.B	AAA	
Į	Standard Life (123)	(10)	130	0	7.7	AAB	
1	Legal & General (62)	(30)	230	ļi —	7.4	AAA	
(	Friends Provident (39)	(33)	1,240	7	7.4	BAA	
ł	Clerical Medical (38)	(33)	1.120	0	7.3	BBA	
١	Commercial Union (24)	(24)	180	0	7.3	ABB	
١	National Mutual (42)	(38)	1,500	13	7.2	BBA	
ļ	Norwich Union (68)	(36)	1,250	7	7.2	BBA	
1	NPI (55)	(29)	1,210	5	7.2	BBB	
1	Scortish Mutual (39)	(21)	80	0	7.1	BBA	
1	AXA Equity & Law (25)	(36)	1,070	10	7.1	BBA	
١	General Accident (46)	(31)	1,250	7	7.0	BBA	
ì	Scottish Life (43)	(39)	1,720	20	6.9	BBA	
1		(38)	770	ll	6.9	BBC	
1	Midland (na)	(36)	na	14	6.B	BBB	
į	Eagle Star (10)	(28)	1,510	13	6.B	BBC	
	Scottish Amicable (44)	(44)	1,210	0	6.7	BBB	
1	Natwest (25)	(49)	1,470	30	6.5	C-BA	
Ì	Sun Life (97)	(40)	2,150	25	6.4	CCB	
1	J.Rothschild (27)	(46)	1, <b>51</b> 0 ·	24	6.4	CCB	
Į	Scottish Equitable (118)	•	1,130	23	6.2	BBB	
	Abbey National	(45)	1,950	31	6.1	CCB	
1	Black Horse (21)	(56)	2,050	35	6.0	C-CA	
1	Allied Dunbar (94)	(5 <del>4</del> )		34	5.9	ccc	
1	TSB (na)	(53)	1,550	27	5.9	CCC-	
١		(40)	1,550		5.B	BCC	
}	Skandia (18)	(55)	1,620	24		CCC	
	Barclays (20)	(59)	1,760	45	5.7		
ļ	Guardian (na)	(62)	2,610	па	na Sn	na C C C	
ı	Abbey Life (43)	(64)	2,390	50	4.4	C-C-C-	
		(54)					

* 30-year plans with premiums of £200 a month, with projected growth of 9 per cent per annum Note - The "correlation" between the estimated average plan return and ABC raongs is less close when plans only allow paid up values after a period, eg after a year with Abbey National and Barclays. Note - Because of lack of des some substantial providers, notably the Prudential (£185m. new income in 1996) could

Lincoln (26)

not be included

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# 9/PROPERTY

# Let the buyer beware ... their surveyor and solicitor

First-time buyers and veteran home-owners alike are sitting ducks. Shoddy surveys shoot us down. So do solicitors who swan off, and vendors with two faces and forked tongues. Overwhelmed by detail and legalese, we are ripe for plucking and gazumping. Robert Liebman visits the shooting range and discovers ways to avoid the quacks

Standing in what was soon to be her master bedroom, Pippa saw a sag in the ceiling. In fact, when she reached up, she actually touched the ceiling. She couldn't deal with this alarming situation, but she knew a man who could.

A communications manager, she had been living with her parents in Sussex, commuting to London, and property hunting in another part of Sussex. Good properties were scarce, and she was relieved to find a decent two-bedroom house.

Pippa had revisited the house only to measure up for furniture, not to look for flaws or structural defects. The lender's surveyor had found nothing amiss and approved the mortgage. Little stood in the way of a rontine exchange and completion. Little, that is, except a ceiling seeking a cuddle with the floor,

Pippa consulted her father, and a few days later he examined the loft. "On a dull day, daylight streamed through a sizeable gap in the roof between the party wall and the roof. If it had been a sunny day, I could have read a book up there," he says.

This was no mere missing or slipped tile. And it wasn't new either. "There were many stained bricks beneath the gap, and you could see where pitch had trickled down along the brickwork. Someone had tried to



Hillary and Andy Morgan are among those who have experienced unnecessary distress due to confusing legalese

Photograph: John Lawrence

The sellers had recently vacated and, his curiosity aroused, Pippa's father scoured the empty premises, which readily revealed its secrets. "I found large cracks in the cupboards, and damp under the stairs. house, the carpet was so damp that it was squidgy to walk on."

He doubts that the surveyor really inspected the loft, and Pippa wonders how the buckling ceiling escaped her notice on her first viewing. She withdrew from the sale, promptly exchanged on another property, and completed. Not, alas, without new surprises in the form of three successive erroneous mortgage offers before the lender finally got the details right - the day before completion.

correct their mortgage offer only once, but faced other, more troubling surprises when they sold their Old Amersham flat to buy a larger flat in High Wycombe. Because Near the fireplace on the other side of the the new property contained neither a garden nor a lift, they anticipated a service charge approximately £1,000 less than the actual amount.

Worrisome, too, was a clause in their lease, which had been scoured by Andy, who has a law degree. "We didn't realise that we would need the freeholder's permission to make internal changes," says Hillary, a marketing manager with publisher HarperCollins in west London. A twosome soon to be a threesome, they

Hillary and Andy Morgan needed to a bedroom. "We had to show the architect's plans to the managing agent, and also pay a fee," she says.

At least their lease was comprehensible. Another recent buyer, Caren, had a lease which, taken literally, seemed to require permission for all internal changes, even down to modernising baths and showers. She intended to let the flat to foreigners, and an upgrading of many interior features was on the cards. Caren insisted on clarification, and it was forthcoming only after she threatened to take her custom elsewhere.

Even her own solicitor was stumped by the lease terminology. Indeed, when it comes to surprises, some solicitors are more intended to convert a huge bathroom into problem than solution. For verification, ask But each had also been deeply distressed

anyone who, on exchange or completion or other crucial day, discovered that their solicitor was on the aptly-named Costa del Sol.

Caren received reassurances and quickly found a tenant after sprucing up the flat. The Morgans were safely delivered of a bouncing new Oat. "No one was bolshie, and we got the permissions, but it delayed things," says Hillary. Completion was much nearer the baby's arrival than we'd anticipated."

Pippa prospered. She soon found a house far superior to the damp and crumbly premises that she probably would have been stuck with had she not gone to measure up. Each enjoyed a satisfactory outcome.

by the unexpected and potentially costly

Hillary Morgan knows what to do next time. "Start sooner. Everything takes longer than you plan for." Pippa will never buy another property without commissioning her own survey. She might also take a lesson out of her father's book: conduct your own thorough survey, and borrow a ladder to look into the loft. Had she done so on her initial visit, she might have spared herself considerable anxiety.

Pippa also believes that "we worry too much about making pests of ourselves. It is up to us to ensure that our solicitors and others involved in the process provide the service they are supposed to provide."

Jane Tait allows you to pester her as much as you want or need to, for only a tenner, Her Home Buyers' Advisory Service, which she founded in 1985, primarily arranges mortgages. However, the £10 entities you to a 45-minute consultation, you don't have to arrange a mortgage with HBAS, and the fee includes unlimited phone calls during the conveyance, for advice or simply to whinge.

After Pippa completed, her parents sold their house to move nearer to her. Convinced about the necessity of nagging. they rang their estate agent and solicitor so often that BT recommended that they specify these phone numbers in their Friends and Family list.

Chance favours those who are prepared. Delve into the various documents. Most of us don't want to deal with large print, let alone small, but the deeds and leases contain vital details. You might be in for a beneficial, if not pleasant surprise.

Home Buyers' Advisory Service, 18 Seymour Place, London W1H 5WH; 0171 723 6001 Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. 12 Great George Street, Parliament Square, London SWIP 3AD; 0171 222 7000 The Law Society, 50 Chancery Lane, London WC24 ISX; 0171 242 1222

### Prices: up, up and away, or hold on tight for a bumpy landing?

Homeowners are notoriously obsessed by how much their property is worth now, and next year. But how seriously can you take those forecasts and is it possible to generalise? Penny Jackson looks at last year's forecasts and what the experts predict for 1998.

Not many people would quibble with two forecasts for house price increases that differ only by 2 per cent. But as the Nationwide predicts an average 7 per cent increase for 1998 and the Halifax 5 per cent, it is interesting to note of hat as our chart shows they varied as much as 6 per cent in 1997.

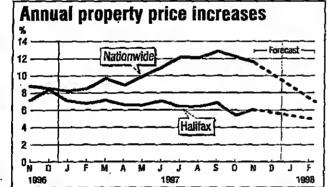
Despite both having started the year predicting 7 per cent, the Halifax now puts the average increase between 5.5 and 6 per cent, while the Nationwide reports a 12 per cent rise.

Rarely have these two major mortgage lenders found themseives so far apart. A major reason is thought to be the London and south-east factor which features more heavily with the Nationwide. In September, for instance, as the Halifax was putting house price inflation in the south-east at 16 per cent for the year, so East Anglia registered at 7.6 per cent and Scotland at 0.8 per cent.

Some parts of central London though saw 40 per cent increases, a scale which caught most people by surprise and has pushed the average to between 18 per cent (De Groot Collis) and 20 per cent (Knight Frank).

Next year, a cooling off at the top of the market is expected. Stamp duty increases in April, overpricing on some properties and uncertainties in the stock markets are all seen as factors. This year's mixed picture should be replaced by a less volatile, more broadly based growth. Savills, whose predictions tally with the Nationwide's current 12 per cent, sees central London prices rising by 4 per cent with the average across the country increasing by 9 per cent.

But how accurate were the



pundits last year and how do they read the trends for '98? Yolande ·Barnes, Savills Research (prime central London was predicted to rise by 7.4 per cent this year and country houses by 14 per cent) says, "In the Home Counties we had seen just over 18 per cent by the end of September as London money moved further out along the main communication links to London, Country house prices were also boosted by strong local economies.

"Prime central London was another story. Our figures were reached in the first quarter but we are not ashamed of the theory that the market would slow down. The signs are that the market is fully if not overvalued. We expect to see an upturn in provincial properties next year with more people coming into the quality league having built up nest eggs. They are not borrowing as much and so can afford to outbid the competition. Purchasing power is high."

David Woodcock, Black Horse Agencies (last year they predicted sharp rises due to demand but an average rise of below 10 per cent): "The reality was an exceptionally buoyant market in London and surrounding areas, with dramatic rises and demand outstripping supply. We are cautiously optimistic for '98, hut the principal cloud is that interest rates will continue to rise. But since the risk of a sizeable rise is fairly low, people will still be able to sell. Hanging on in the hope of obtaining a higher price is unlikely to lead to significant benefit. Across the eastern and Midlands regions Black Horse expects increases between 5 and 7 per cent with some hotspots. In the north prices should start to rise steadily at a rate between 3 and 5 per cent."

Bill Hughes of country division Cluttons Daniel Smith (in London they predicted 10 per cent, with some properties increasing by 20 per cent): "We are not as bullish as last year. Job losses in the banking world could have a regional impact in the middle ranges. There is still huge pent-up demand and in the £450,000 market we expect rises of about 7 per cent, but in the £750,000 to £1.2 million between 7 and 10 per cent."

Ian Darby, John Charcol. mortgage advisers (Predicted price rise of 5 to 6 per cent and interest rate rise of 8.75 by end of this year. Rates now stand at 8.7 per cent]: "I can see a potential for another rate increase and the likelihood of some rate falls later in the year ending with a mortgage rate of 8.49 per

lan Homersham, John D Wood (Predicted prices rising by about 12 per cent): "Confidence has returned generally and short of a serious stock market crash there is no reason why the market should lose any of its momentum. We predict increases ranging from 2 per cent to 5 per cent in Fulham and between 10 per cent and 15 per cent in Mayfair '

Chris Palmer, managing director Hampton International. "My view is that 1998 will be a year of two halves, with a slight dip in prices in the early part which in conjunction with unrealistic vendors may cause a hiatus in the market. Barring any horrific measures in the Budget we should see a strong second half with an overall increase of

### 'More than anything I miss being at the centre of things. There's not even a Gap in Winchester'

All city dwellers dream from time to time about escaping the rat race and moving to the country, but what happens to the minority who actually do it? Ginetta Vedrickas listens to three salutary stories.

Wouldn't it be lovely? Scampering around country lanes in search of twisted willow for floral displays then home to the farmhouse and huttery crumpers for rea. Quick, slap my face, I'm having one of those rural idyll fantasies again.

Peter Ripley, like myself, obviously read too much Enid Blyton as a child - I spent every summer in Devon with my granddad, roaming fields and beaches like the Famous Five. After an idyllic holiday in Comwall with his children, Mr Ripley decided to act; he gave up work, sold their Putney terrace and moved the family to a remote, Cornish mining village.

Did it live up to expectation? "At first it was like being on a fabulously long holiday, away from pollution and noise. It was summer, we had friends down and spent weeks exploring the coast, collecting fossils and enjoying our cottage," says Mr

But eventually summer turned to autumn, friends visited less frequently and the only work Mr Ripley found was poorly paid. Everyone takes huge pay cuts in the country so you end up with a worse standard of living." Isolation became a problem: "I was the only man at home with children so people in the village thought I was odd." Were the neighbours friendly? "They were Comish nationalists and liked badger baiting and breeding lurchers. It was like being in Alahama."

The family stuck it for a year but even the fure of the summer couldn't tempt them to stay. The contage proved difficult to sellbut they were was so desperate to return they left anyway and rented in London, When Mr Ripley finally sold, he'd lost



Paradise glossed: the reality of the rural retreat can be one of isolation and poor pay

£30,000, Is London worth it? "It's fantastic. We make much mure effort to take advantage of theatres, galleries, everything that's going." Any advice for aspiring Arcadians? "It depends what sort of person you are. We had friends who were just as isolated but they loved it, they were artists and liked sit-

ting around naked." Roger and Maggie Hands yearned for a "chocolate box thatched cottage" where Maggie could bake and potter in the garden. When Roger, an architect, was offered work in a remote village near Kendal, Cumbria they seized the opportunity to exchange life at the heavy end" of Finsbury Park for something more peaceful. The Hands spotted an advert in the Kendal Gazette for a tiny shephord's cottage to rent. After an interview with the estate manager, "we found ourselves cleaning out 10 years of rabbit shit that the previous tenant, a shepherd, had left". The family settled down to a radically different lifestyle and the children

attended the tiny village school

with two classes and 37 children. Domesticity reigned: "It was stunningly beautiful in winter and summer and I was busy with the house. I'd always wanted a

real coal fire and I made lots of quilts," says Ms Hands. On the edge of a country estate, gamekeepers passed by in their Land-Rovers: "We were plucked from one kind of lifestyle into another. Cows poked their heads over our garden fence and we'd spend days walking by streams and waterfalls." The locals heard that people from London had moved up and Maggie, Roger and their children soon found themselves involved in the community: "I relied on events like Tupperware parties, things I wouldn't normal-

ly do, just to fit in." Eventually Ms Hands tired of Tupperware and wanted to work. "There wasn't any and I felt I was stagnating. I was bored with things I'd hoped would become a way of life." The Hands missed London's spontaneity: "If you fancied popping out for a drink or a bar of chocolate at night you

couldn't. You had to plan because everything was miles away." Rain and icy winds drifted in from the fells and Ms Hands soon got fed up cleaning out the grate for the coal fire.

When Roger's firm had little work the family felt the decision to move back was made for them. Although sad to leave they felt ready to go. How did they find heavy Finsbury Park? "It seemed so lively I got a thrill just from walking to the shops at night," says Ms Hands. They have no regrets although the children insist they won't move from their road.

Daviria Nicholson moved with baby Tasca from London's Kensal Green early this year to a remote cottage near Winchester. "Its only an hour and a half from London, but there's no shop, no phone box, just trees." Ms Nicholson says. "I thought this would be our final move, just me and my daughter, but maybe it suits couples

Having grown up in the country she felt she knew it well and could adjust to rural life

again. Has she? "It's incredible how much slower, quieter and just totally different it is." She loves walking and has a social network but at night on her way to parties... "The fucking mud, what do you do? There aren't any street lights," says Ms Nicholson.

The Rural Development Commission published a survey this week showing that 42 per cent of rural parishes bave no shop but Ms Nicholson has more specifie requirements: "More than anything I miss being at the centre of things. There's so much you don't think about in London, the billboards, the style. I'm no fashion victim but there's not even a Gap in Winchester."

Ms Nicholson believes London is atypical of England: "I'm used to London not England and ultimately it's very limited here." You get the feeling she will be placing her (Donna Karan) wellies in storage in the very near future. The next time you have one of those "Famous Five" fantasies, remember, they never mentioned the mud.

AT HOME/FITTED SHELVES

# Get a (shelf) life, and get yourself organised ...

Good shelving, apparently, is like an English butler, inconspicuous, but bad shelving sticks out like a sore thumb. Rosalind Russell checks out the very latest in designer systems which can be dismantled and taken with you when you move house.

It can put you off moving for years. The thought of trying to find a new home with eoough shelves to take a treasured collection - leaving hehind shelves that probably cost a small fortune to instal is a daunting prospect. Books, model aero-

Comedian David Baddiel was lucky eoough to huy a house in Belsize Park, fitted with David Lindley designer bookcases. But then again, at £875,000, you'd expect to find a deceot hit of carpeotry.

The answer could he to invest in shelves you can take with you when you move. Vitsoe, based in north London, developed the 606 universal shelving system which can be attached to the wall, or compressed between the floor and ceiling. Unlike most shelf manufacturers, Vitsoe will come and dismantle it for you wheo you leave and reinstal it in your new home. You can start with as little as £150-worth and add to it later.

The designers have been careful to ensure the style and colours won't go out of fashioo, or be discontinued, so up to 50 per ceot of their customers are still adding on, years from the original purchase. Light grey, black and silver are the main shelf colours, although beechwood is used too, with anodised aluminium poles. Unsurprisingly, Vitsoe's spare, clean lines are popular with architects and

"We see mostly private clients," says Vitsoe's Mark Adams, "but we have also moved shelves from office to home, or vice

Adams's own home oear Tower Bridge - which he and his textile designer wife Jeony Moocur receotly sold to Lily Savage and her/his manager - was a prime example of how the system works in a home and office. Jenny was able to design and work her massive pieces of tapestry within the Grade II-listed huilding which had been practically rebuilt inside. (One of her designs is oo Janet Street-Porter's snooker room floor.)

The floor to ceiling system has been used to divide rooms and to screeo a tall, thin kitcheo window (ootably in the former home of Sir Norman Foster in Comptoo Bassett, io Wiltshire). But it comes into its own in period homes where fixing to wood panelling, dado rails planes or glass sculpture, they all require or delicate plaster is oot an optioo. It has also been successfully fitted in a basement flat with sloping ceilings, oo a wall hlighted by an ugly gas meter. The plates the upright poles are fitted to can be set at an angle; a shelf was fitted vertically to screeo the meter. "Good shelving," says Mark Adams, "is like an English butler inconspicuous.

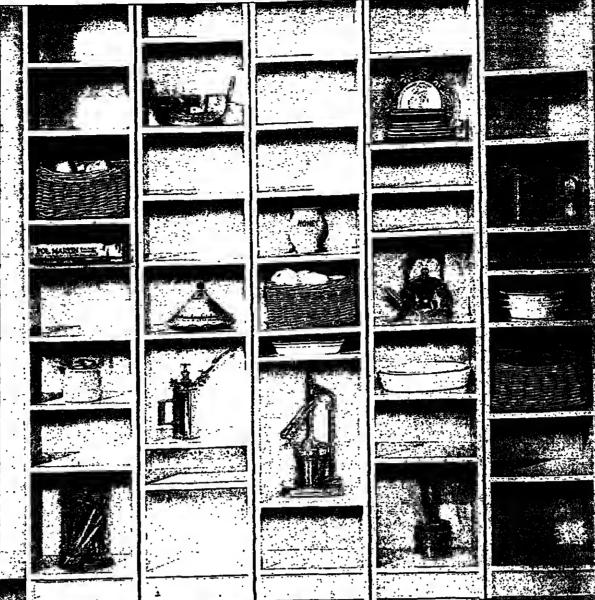
The company also rationalised its packing, which is now taken away after installation and re-used, because they couldn't bring themselves to junk perfectly good boxes. Vitsoe, which sells through the Conran shops, charges £25 for a site visit, refundable against purchase.

The Japanese company Muji, which opened a new store in Oxford Street a few weeks ago bringing its strength up to five, is also promoting the minimalist line in shelving. A five-shelf perforated steel unit costs £125. Used as ooe of a pair of towers, three drawer cabinets can be fitted between them, giving an eotire unit costing £625. There are various permutations possible, seen in Muji's new catalogue which also includes china, cutlery and its already distinctive, if passion-killing, underwear. As yet, huyers from outside London will have to rely on 0171-354 8444 for brochure; Muji, 0171-Muji mail order, but there are plans to 323 2208; Holding Company mail order open more stores in the UK over the oeat brochure 0171-610 9160; Homebase 0645

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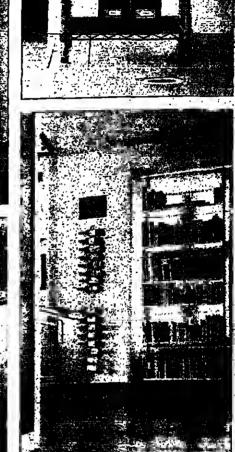


Above, the Holding Company's eight-tier tower units in hirch; above right, Homebase chrome shelf unit; right and far right, the Vitsoe 606 universal shelving system

Cheaper shelving doesn't have to look naff. The Holding Company sells an eight-tier uoit, which can be grouped with others, in birch, maple, white, greeo and black for £69.95. And Homebase charges £68.99 for a tall, narrow chrome shelf unit which will fit in most tight corners.

Further information: Vitsoe, telephone





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#### THREE TO VIEW: WITH FITTED SHELVES



Strand Platt in Winchelsea, East Sussex is a Grade II listed five-bedroom house in need of upgrading. The panelled diningroom has a full-height built-in china cupboard with shelves and glazed door. The walled garden, helonging to the house, is on the opposite side of the lane and adjoins National Trust land. With sash windows, dado beight panelling and exposed timbers, it's for sale through Phillips & Stubbs for £230,000 (01797 227338)



The Old House at Frampton on the Severn in Gloucestershire is celebrating its 500th birthday. The Grade II listed six-bedroom house, built five years after Christopher Columbus discovered America, has a 15ft library with a range of fitted cupboards on two walls and adjustable bookshelves with concealed lighting. There are more shelves in a gallery. The main rooms overlook the one-and-a-half acre gardens and the village green. £525,000 through Knight Frank (01285 659771).



41 St Loo's Avenue in Chelsea is an artist's studio built above private garages. Within walking distance of Sloane Square, it has a large studio room with huilt-in shelves, a 9'4" ceiling height and an arched triple window. Apart from kitchen and bathroom, there's also a studio room with more shelves. £215,000 through Cluttons Daniel Smith (0171-584 1771) - ;

# When the neighbours have bad taste

Despite planning regulations, it is still surprisingly easy to create an eyesore. Fiona Brandhorst surveys the neighbourhood.

tr's a hit like playing with a Fifties-style Bako Build set: take out the sash windows, replace with a Georgian hay complete with bull's-eyes, cover the bricks with pebbledash and insert a couple of Doric pillars under a porch. Look in any street, and you'll find a so-called "home improvement" that is unsympathetic to its environment.

Unfortunately, one person's eyesore is another's pride and joy and there is little to stop anyone from giving a prop-erty its own stamp of individuality.

Fancy painting your house lime green with pink windowsills, or growing giant cacti in the garden? Go ahead. If you don't live in a conservation, trust or covenanted area, planning permission will probably not be required.

However, some local authorities have learnt a lesson from the home improvement legacies of the past 30 years. Bromley, the largest of the London boroughs, is so concerned that it has produced a leaflet. Conservation Begins at Home, warning that misguided bome improvements can damage the appearance and value of your bouse. Robin Cooper, head of Heritage and Urban Design for Bromley, is thankful that the "stick-on bricks era" is over (should you still hanker after stone cladding, it now requires planning permission). "Some people have spent a lot of money altering their properties," says Mr Cooper, "However, if the character of the house changes, this can mean that the resale value drops."

Local authorities bave limited powers to deal with complaints from residents. Gardens constantly littered with old furniture or bits of cars can be served with untidy site notices, but the response may be slow. Most of us bours, but if you're unlucky enough to live next door to an uninhabited bomes in England and Wales - you could be in for a long wait before action is taken.

2: owner to respond to repeated calls to empty-when there are so many home-



Thorn in the side: one person's eyesore is another's pride and joy

Photograph: Andrew Buurman

property, Reading Council recently took the unprecedented step of naming ber publicly. For almost 12 years. Gillian Murdoch's former council house in Lamerton Road has stood empty, attracting squatters, rubhish dumping, burglars, arsonists, drug addiets and rats. Even the building society with a call over the property did not know it was empty; the mortgage was still being paid. The council has now removed the rats, but is concerned that it will incur further costs if the house is not brought back into use; suffer a blot on the landscape for the most empty properties are exempt sake of good relations with our neigh- from council tax. Mark Adlington, a neighbour, is angry that the property has been allowed to rot. "It's a daneyesore - there are 764,000 empty ger to public health as well as an eyesore," says Mr Adlington, who has personally removed hypodermic syringes from the garden to protect local ·Incensed by the inability of a house children. "It's a scandal that it stands

The scale of the problem led, last month, to the launch of the London Empty Homes Hotline, prompting hundreds of calls from the public. The manager, Erinn Buchanan, says the quality of information varies. "Some people don't know the number of the house or even the street; uthers know the whole history of the property, including the mortgage holder. We even have calls from estate agents wanting to know where these empty houses are. Of course, the information is data protected." In fact, a massive 41 per cent of homes become empty because of the death or long-term illness of the occupier. Government figures suggest that repossessions and evictions account for 10 per cent of empty homes. Around 19 per cent of calls to the hotline are from the owners themselves, uncertain how to deal with their

empty property. They are told about the options

housing associations to hring the property hack into use; they, in turn, will manage and let the property for the owner until they decide to sell.

In extreme cases, bowever, when all attempts to trace an owner bave been made, a council may compulsorily purchase a property. Lewisham Council in south London has spent several years tracing the owner of a large Victorian bouse, empty for 15 years and subjected to fires, fly-tipping and vandalism. The council now believes the owner was killed in the Iran-Iraq war, and has enforced a statutory charge against it to sell the bouse at auction. From the proceeds, the council will recover any costs incurred. If the owner is unknown, the balance will be claimed by a relative at any time, subject to 40 per cent death duty.

officer for Bromley, says that with lim-

"reactive" rather than pro-active, relying on residents to tell the council of any problems. "We only bave four enforcement officers covering 3,500 roads over 60 square miles," be adds.

From my Victorian bouse with its inherited "Georgian improvements". I look at the timber-clad property opposite, affectionately known as "the shed". Its only permanent residents for the past five years bave been a rapidly breeding colony of pigeons. So far the council has been unable to get any reply from the absent owner. But in the grand scheme of things, it's early days -1 could still be looking at my feathered friends in 10 years' time.

Bromley Planning Enquiries 0181-313 lodged with the Treasury and can be 4956; Reading Borough Council 0118 939 0900; London Empty Homes Hotline 0870 901 6303; Empty Homes Mark Baker, development control Agency 0171-828 6288: Royal Town Planning Institute 0171-636 9107; Eng-

# Now you can paint your listed building without demolishing it

in the past, making changes to listed buildings was considered demolition. Cive Fewins looks at a new government directive that puts the onus on

Just where does alteration end and demolition begin? The answer to this question has been plaguing owners of Britain's estimated 700,000 listed buildings (and 1.7 million unlisted huildings in conservation areas) for many years.

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Time after time owners of these buildings have complained that they cannot even pick up a paintbrush without obtaining listed building consent. and that local authority hureaucrats have been over-zealous in their interpretation of well-intentioned laws that were never intended to apply to such minor matters.

This has been a cause of particular friction in instances such as the ones where local authorities have defined the planned removal of a chimney breast or a portico as "demo-

Since the introduction of the Town and Country Planning Acts in the 1960s many local authorities have been claiming that alteration and demolition are the same thing, prevenling many householders living in listed buildings or within conservation areas from carrying

out the simplest of tasks. For owners of unlisted buildings in conservation areas trivial changes like trimming a tree, erecting a fence or changing a front door have required consent. This can be complicated to apply for, and obtaining it can take a long time.

However all this has now changed - or at least planners, conservation officers and other professionals in the business think it has - with a new government directive that theoretically makes it far easier for development rights and forces owners of listed huddings and houses in conservation areas to make alterations to their

The new directive, Circular 14/97, results from a House of Lords ruling earlier this year in which the Town and Country Listed Building and Conservation Areas Act, stating that demolition of unlisted huildings in a conservation area require consent but alterations do not. is clarified. Demolition is now defined as "a proposal to de-

molisb all of a building". However, it is still unclear as to how the new directive will affect owners of listed buildings because they need special cousent for alterations which affect the character of the building, as well as for "demolition proposals.

"In effect the ruling puts owners of listed huildings in a self-assessment situation as to whether they apply for listed huilding consent for alterations that fall short of total demolition," said Adrian Dobinson, a partner in the Bath-based Renaissance architectural design practice, who has been campaigning for such a relaxation for 20 years.

"Until there is a history of precedent established through the courts. just what will or won't constitute a change to the not constituting "demolition" character of the huilding will be at the discretion of the owners and their advisers, in consultation with the local authority.

"The reality is that the vast majority of works short of total demolition can and will now be undertaken without consent." However, if the local au-

thority considers the proposed alterations alter the historic character of a listed huilding it is still possible to issue an Artide 4 Direction, a little-used device that removes permitted a housebolder to apply for con-

Planning committees have sometimes been reluctant to issue Article 4 Directions in the past, as they are obliged to pay compensation if the householder incurs any financial loss as a result of a reduction of his permitted development rights. "In the absence of effective

alternatives this may be the shape of things to come," Mr Dohinson said. *Owners of listed huildings should be aware that local authorities retain the right to

challenge works in retrospect. as bappened in the celchrated case of Tory MP Teresa Gorman and her husband, who were heavily fined for making more than 30 illegal alterations to their historic farmhouse

home. Kenneth Dijksman, a local authority planner as well as a writer and broadcaster on planning issues, says: "Fortunately for the conservation lobby this directive is not as radical as it sounds. While some may think it has driven a coach and horses through the listed building legislation, local authorities still have the protection of Article 4, which many authorities use with confidence.

"With listed buildings, works are still likely to require consent by virtue of being alterations. "The law has been redefined

in an unclear way and the listed huilding legislation still exists. The redefinition is only really a matter of semantics and only time will tell if it has made any real difference."

### 'If someone wanted to bring in tarantulas, or 15 dogs, the residents' association could say no ...'

The price of living in a new, sought-after development may be Draconian rules. Mary Wilson reports on the estates where dogs are not welcome, washing cannot be hung outside - and unmarried couples have to be careful who dies first.

If you live in a detached house in the middle of nowhere, you have the freedom to do what you want when you want - clean the car, paint the house a garish colour, play loud music or keep a pack of huskies in your back garden. Should you decide to trade down to a new apartment, which is easier to run and more secure, you may find some of that freedom curtailed.

The lease will have conditions and restrictions in it to prevent unneighbourly behaviour, but not all incoming residents are happy to be so constrained,

Apartment blocks may not be controlled quite so severely as in America, where the residents' board vets incoming purchasers, but there has to be some level of control, especially in high-value, low-volume developments.

"At a new development in north London, the wording of the leases is such to protect people from each other's excesses," says Trevor Abrahmsohn, of Glentree Estates (0181-458 7311. Owners will need a dog or cat licence from the landlord: they are not permitted to sublet; they have to clean their windows at prescribed intervals: the colour of their outdoor furniture and style of sunhlinds has to he approved; and certainly no washing can hung outside to dry.

Other restrictions include being harred from putting down hard floors anywhere they like, because of the acoustic insulation, or being unable to play an instrument out of social hours." says Abrahmsohn.

The biggest contention is over pets. Someone moving in with their beloved peoch will not be best pleased to discover that there is a restriction on the sort of pet, if one is allowed at all. The usual proviso is that it be small, welltrained and quiet, which cuts out hounce Rouweilers and supply Yorkies.

At Parkhury, for example, an apartment development in Branksome Park. one person, and, for another pur-



In high-value, low-volume developments, even the colour of your furniture may be outside your control

Dorsel, with 1.7 acres of private communal woodland and gardens - perfect for morning walkies - owners are allowed a pet only with the prior written consent of the landlord.

"At the moment that is the developer. Artesian, but when all the flats are sold the landlord will be the residents themselves," says Paul Grimwood, the marketing manager. "So if other residents decide that your pet is a nuisance, you will have to do something about it."

The 12 large, three-bedroom apartments and two penthouses are being sold by the agent Stephen Noble (01202 557766), at from £242,500 to £345,000. He says: "At some developments there is a lifetime agreement, which means that when your pet dies. it cannot be replaced."

At Croshy Homes (Midlands)' Symplany Court development in Birmingham, the company was as helpful as it could. "The lease stipulates that pets are allowed only with the permission of the landlord," says Keith Pepperdine, the sales and managing director. "So if someone wanted to bring in a horde of tarantulas or 15 dogs, we, or the residents' association, could say no.

"However, we put in a cat tunnel for

chaser, built a couple of steps. Her cat was rather old, and she was worried it wouldn't be able to get up to the flap." he explains.

Leases nearly always bave a nuisance clause in them, to prevent owners making an untoward noise, but this can he difficult to control. You may be told that you can have only fitted carpets, or be forbidden to play a television set or stereo loudly after midnight.

Another common probibition is the erection of a satellite dish. Not good news for an avid sportsman, unless the building has one large, communal dish, as at Gleeson Homes' (01433 651532) conversion of Bamford Mill in Derbyshire,

Al some developments you are not allowed to wash your car, nor can you keep commercial vehicles or carry out repairs. "I remember a builder, who his work van, with his business logo, in the car park outside his home," says James Best-Shaw, of Cluttons Daniel

At Springwood Manor, a Honeygrove development near Tonbridge in Kent, owners are not allowed to erect any external structures except for a sun blind, which has to match those already stay on.

fitted, or to keep a boat, caravan, motor home or pick-up trailer unless they are hidden away in a garage, or carry out spray-painting or welding.

"Most of these restrictions are welcomed by our apartment owners, because they are designed to promote and enhance neighbourly relations and living in a communal environment," says Andrew Henry, of Honeygrove. (Apartments are for sale from £240,000

to £650,000, 01732 369935). Where there is a minimum age limit, the rules may be complex. At a Crosby Homes' development of apartments at Sutton Coldfield, only people over 55 are allowed to huy. This is not a retirement development: the planning restriction was implemented to reduce the use of cars.

A married couple aged 45 and 55 years uld can live at the development, bought a property at a development in and should the older partner die, the East Kent, not being allowed to park remaining spouse will be able to stay in perpetuity. If he or she were then tn marry someune younger, and later died with the other partner still under 55, that partner would have to move out. However, should an unmarried couple buy there, with one being under 55, and the older partner dies, the remaining partner will not be allowed to

# The classic hobby that generates £1.6bn

Classic cars: antisocial gasguzzlers, or a force for good? John Simister looks at the

How do you feel when you see a "classic" car out and about? Pleased that 1 a piece of history has been preserved; or outraged that we still allow these polluting old heaps to be driven?

There are forces at work to protect us from classic cars on the grounds that they are bad for our health, but the truth is that only the enthusiast's hank balance suffers. A survey carried out by the Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs shows that the law-makers would do well oot to make life difficult for owners of classic cars. Any deleterious effect oo the eovironment is minimal, while the industry that supports the hobby turns over £1.6bn a year for UK

Of course, the federation would say that. It exists to protect the interests of classic car owners from encroaching, Brussels-geoerated restrictions, and closely watches legislation as it is enacted to make sure it does not affect the freedom to use classic cars. But the intentioo behind this survey was to prove that classic car owners, rather than a bunch of insignificant obsessives, have considerable economic clout.

The FBHVC sent a questionnaire to every member of every classic car club. For the purposes of the survey. "classic" meant any pre-1977 car with which its owner had a particular affinity. Owners were asked to complete just one questionnaire each, even if they belonged to more than

The research was processed by the University of Central England, with the help of Classic Cars magazine, and the



Ferraris set the pulses racing at the Goodwood Festival of Speed

Photograph: Mark Pain

emerged from the 36,000 returned questionnaires, and further research carried out by the FBHVC:

■ There are 658,570 pre-1977 vehicles in existence, 64 per cent of which are licensed and on the road.

67 per cent of cars are not used as

 The total UK vehicle count is 26.3 million, so roadworthy pre-1977 cars make up just 2.5 per cent of them. Yet, despite this:

 Annual turnover for classic cars sales, repairs, restoration, parts supply, museum visits, events - is £1.6bn, findings were presented to the House regular transport, contributing to the £300m of which is generated by exof Lords on 13 November. This is what low average annual mileage of 1,224. ports. That is more than you would 15 per cent of them from overseas.

need to run every racing team in Formula One.

 More than 25,000 people are employed in providing products and services, many of them practising traditional, labour-intensive skills.

 Car museums and collections are visited by 380,000 dub members a year,

There are many more than 36,000 members of classic car clubs, so some of those figures could be higher. Certainly the classic car industry is a hig earner and provider of livelihoods.

Why, then, has the FBHVC felt the need to publicise its cause? Restricting the use of classic cars (though the Government is against the idea) would be an easy way to be seen to be "doing something to clean up the environment". Yet, properly maintained, they are no more polluting per unit of exhaust gas than a relatively modern car made just before catalytic converters became a standard fitment.

Factor in the low mileages, and the environmental impact of classic cars is minute. If you want to see and smell real stinkers, spend a day in Loodon following huses, trucks and taxis up a few hills. That's where the real problem lies, with tired-out diesel engines.

The other pressure oo classic cars comes from the makers of new cars, who want the Government to offer incentives for scrapping cars 10 years old in the form of a rebate on a new car. Eoviroomeotal and safety issues are trumpeted as the driving forces here. hut it's hard oot to detect an ulterior motive. Such a move would distort the new car market in favour of small, cheap, low-profit cars, just as it did in France, where the scheme has oow been abaodoned. The environmental argument is shaky, anyway, because it typically takes a decade - a car's average lifespan - before the energy saved in rucoing a new, more efficient car instead of a decade-old one matches the energy takeo to huild it.

Provided they are in decent fettle (and that's an important proviso), it's greener to keep the oldies going. And there's a vast industry, higger in Britain than anywhere else in Europe, ready to help you do just that. The classic car movement does much good and minimal harm, and the Brussels mandarins should leave well alone,

# The safest car is never in a crash



GAVIN GREEN

Car safety is one of the

higgest issues exercising the minds of motor industry hoffins. It's odd, then, that in some major areas, cars are now less safe than they've ever been. The motor industry, like much of commercial. business, tends to be rather single-issue obsessed, depending on the prejudices and social pressures of the moment. If the issue of the day is crash protectioo, then that is what the industry egged on by naive legislators and, often equally naïve media must provide. And crash protection, to most drivers and most car makers, means minimising or preyenting injury in an accident.

Cars that fail to cushion their occupants in government or motor magazine tests against concrete walls are castigated. Other factors - how nimble is its handling? How good are its brakes? How panoramic is driver visibility? How immuoe is it to rolling over? - are ignored. Car makers are encouraged to huild massively strong structures and pad . occupants with airbags. These elements are now more important than huilding cars designed to

avoid accidents. The two most impressive new cars of 1997 underline my argument. Mercedes-Benz was so obsessed with making the A-class the safest place to be in a crash that it overlooked its ability to avoid an accident. In an extreme slalom test, it has a is not the only modern car inclined to lean excessively. Many oew cars are unusually tall -4x4s, MPVs, some newhreed Japanese tiny tots. In extremis, they would all be more likely to turn over than a normal saloon or coupé. Modern tyres, which offer superb grip, exacerbate the problem. As they grip, rather than sliding, so they're more likely to trip a leaning structure.

The new Volkswagen Golf, an excellent car in

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so many areas, has a separate safety design fault, also symptomatic of many modern cars. Part of the Golf styling character. is its thick rear pillars. They give the car an : --appearance of solidity and add structural rigidity. And yet it is difficult to see out of the back. Many rival small cars,

keen to increase their own structural strength, have followed the Golf, with equal, visibilityreducing results. The new Citroën Xsara, a likeable, well-priced but disappointingly anodyne car, offers not much more than a porthole-sized rear window. Reversing out of a driveway, and seeing over your shoulder as you merge with traffic, are both difficult. No doubt the beefed-up rear end would withstand impacts well. This is just as well: Xsara drivers may need the protection.

Many other cars are similarly afflicted. Most new cars now offer substantially less rear visibility than a decade ago, all in the aid of strengthening hodies to avoid injury once an accident has happened. Of course, there have

been some hig gains in primary safety over the past decade or so. The proliferation of anti-lock brakes and improved tyre design has helped enormously. But, at the same time, cars have become longer, wider, heavier and higher, mostly to give them more body muscle to withstand thumps. As they get higger, they become unwieldy. One of the safest Elise. It weighs only half as much as many small family hatches and is the nimblest handling car on the planet. Its hrakes, too, are superb. I would not choose to have a hig accident in one. On the other hand, you would be at least twice as likely to avoid most accidents in an Elise. as you would in a large estate car, an MPV or - most revealing of all an off-roader.

And as any boxer will tell you, avoiding a blow is much better than merely cushioning it.

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# Bulging biceps but shame about the face

The Lexus is a fine car, no question. But an object of desire? Forget it. John Simister reports.

Why might you want a BMW, an Audi or a Mercedes-Benz? Your reasons could be to do with notions of fine engineer- Not Sunday-morning car-wash ing and sculptural design, of a erisply-honed driving experience involving a smooth engine and well-mannered handling. If so, the new Lexus GS300 is aimed right at your wish list.

Or it could be to do with notions of understated quality, an aura of integrity and permanence. The Lexus is looking good here, too. Then there's style and prestige, the pleasure that comes from looking at a beautiful thing and from knowing that others admire your taste and judgement. Another result for the Lexus? Well, oo.

So just when it looked as though the Japanese had cracked the German stronghold, they blow it. And what's a Lexus GS300, anyway?

It used to he a dramaticlooking upmarket saloon whose hir. Io the old GS300, the body design grew out of the concept car created by Giugiaro for the world motor show circuit. Launched in 1993, it has just been replaced by a new version hecause Japan's four-year model cycle has come round again. So much for permanence. Anyway, it's this oew version that we are interested in here.

This time. Toyota, the Lexus parent company, did the body design itself. Clearly, the designers

The devil of an Imp

It was a truly horrible car. If ever

there were a car from hell, this

must have been it. A nasty little

hattleship-grey 1964 Hillman

lmp, which cost me £150. I

bought it before I'd passed my

test - which took five goes.

However, two of those tests

were cancelled because of the

weather and a civil servants'

get to drive the Imp for quite

When I did get to use it every

day I soon found out that the

seller had been less than hon-

est about its condition, and

the bodywork was made of

of the local rag, stuffed under

the wheel-arches and inside

the doors to cover gaping holes.

The previous owner had also

I kept finding rolled up hits

some time.

strike. So that meant I did not a career in journalism - by

construction, for that matter: hizarre. It was difficult to get at

an accident.

wanted to make their new baby look something like a Mercedes, because its front and rear lights have a very E-class-like design of separate lenses. The front grille is shaped similarly to the old car's

some stirrings of heritage there -but the sides look high and slabby despite some half-hearted hlisters over the wheel-arches. ist-inducing, then. Nor does the interior fan any

flames of desire, despite luminous white instrument faces, passable wood vencer, a CD stacker in the glovebox, deliciously damped controls and electric adjustment for the steering-wheel as well as the seats. The shape of the dashboard is just too dull. Still, there's the option of a stupendously effective, bigscreen satellite navigation system complete with real-time moving map and a nonchalant vocal delivery. There's more room than in the old car, too, though the new one is shorter on the outside. That's achieved mainly by mouoting the engine further back, itself made possible by us-

ing a slimmer air-conditioner. The engine. This is the best straight-six, 3.0-litre eogine sounded a shade rough and rorty at high revs, and the autogears abruptly at times. But this engine, still a twin-cam, 24valve straight-six (smoother than a fashiooahle V6, if less compact) is oow both more powerful and sweeter, thanks in part to variable valve timing. With up to 218hhp on tap, this

is a satisfyingly rapid car.

ing it in hlack paint. Yet I'd be-

lieved everything he had said

about it being in good condition

and reliable. The truth was that

on every single journey some-

thing would go wrong. I lost

count of the times I had to fin-

ish a trip on foot, or walk to the

nearest phone box to call for

help. Not the best way to start

missing out on appointments or

worse the Imp got, overheating

mostly. I found the location of

the engine, in the boot, very

and always going wrong. That

much, and always felt as though

it were teetering on the edge of

In fact, my scariest moment

disguised the rust by just cover- other way, on my side of 'he scrap and replaced it with a pea- American field.

layout didn't help the handling really bad memories. What pos-

The longer I owned it, the

never making it there at all.

MY WORST CAR/IAN DARKE'S HILLMAN IMP

Price: £31.200 (S), £34.070 (SE). Engine: 2,997cc. six cylinders, 24 valves, 218bhp at 5,800rpm. Five-speed automatic gearbox, rear-wheel drive. Performance: top speed

Work the engine hard, and

it will emit the creamy yowl of

a good BMW. It will always be

running at the optimum speed,

too, because the new five-speed

gearbox shifts responsively vet

very smoothly. It's one of the

hest autos I've tried. There are

similar plaudits for the suspen-

sion, for this is an agile car with

precise steering, yet it soaks up

hicle Stahility Control, too,

vidual hrakes and eases the

It has a skid-alleviating Ve-

which selectively applies indi- flat. In this material world of

Ian Darke's Imp was largely built of newspaper

how we avoided each other I'll son. If I'd been a boxer instead

never know. But for mc that of a commentator, I think I'd

sums the car up, because all the have gone back to the seller of

useless at getting you anywhere? York, on Friday 19 December to

In the end, it was utterly un- commentate for Sky TV on

road, in pitch darkness. The

driver must have been drunk:

the Imp does is bring back

itive things can you say about a

car that looked so awful, and was

was meeting a car coming the saleable. I sent the Imp for Prince Nuscem Hamed's first

humps with no fuss or fidger.

143mph, 0-60 in 8.0sec. Fuel consumption: 20-25mpg.

Audi A6 2.8 quattro: £30,606. Best-looking of the prestige saloons, delightful detailing, 4WD for terrific grip.

throttle if you try to pour too

much power through the rear

wheels oo a slippery road. Not

that you'll often feel it bleep and

jerk into action, because the

equal of a BMW 528i, no ques-

tion. Taking the standard equip-

ment into account, it compares

well on costs, too, whether as an

S or as a leather-trimmed,

gizmo-laden SE. But to gaze at,

or to boast about, the Lexus falls

green Triumph Herald which felt like a Rolls-Royce in compari-

that Imp and sorted him out.

lan Darke will be ringside at

Mudison Square Garden, New

ours, that's a problem.

To drive, the GS300 is the

tyres' grip is remarkable.

servative to look at, satisfying to drive, but not the benchmark it was.

R29 UHM

Mercedes-Benz E280 Classic: Benz into Lexus price range.

BMW 528i SE: £30,880. Con- new V6 engine is very smooth, car feels unbreakable Saab 9-5 3.0 SE: £28,995, Best of the new 9-5 range, with lively "asymmetric" turbo V6 and £32,490. Low trim level puts good handling. Looks dated; quality not quite right yet.

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